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The Chamber of the Inn of the White Falcon.

FRONTISPIECE—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4.

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THE
Wandering Jew

BY
EUGENE SUE

CONTAINING THE DORE ILLUSTRATIONS

In Five Volumes—Volume Four

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THE WANDERING JEW.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE LETTER.

SOME minutes before the entrance of Mdlle. de Cardoville into the greenhouse, Rodin had been introduced by Faringhea into the presence of the prince, who, still under the influence of the burning excitement into which he had been plunged by the words of the half-caste, did not appear to perceive the Jesuit. The latter, surprised at the animated expression of Djalma's countenance, and his almost frantic air, made a sign of interrogation to Faringhea, who answered him privately in the following symbolical manner: After laying his forefinger on his head and heart, he pointed to the fire burning in the chimney, signifying by his pantomimic action

that the head and heart of Djalma were both in flames. No doubt Rodin understood him, for an imperceptible smile of satisfaction played upon his wan lips; then he said aloud to Faringhea, "I wish to be alone with the prince. Let down the shade, and see that we are not interrupted." The half-caste bowed, and touched a spring near the sheet of plate-glass, which slid into the wall as the blind descended; then, again bowing, Faringhea left the room. It was shortly after, that Mdlle. de Cardoville and Florine entered the greenhouse, which was now only separated from the room in which was Djalma by the transparent thickness of a shade of white silk, embroidered with large colored birds. The noise of the door, which Faringhea closed as he went out, seemed to recall the young Indian to himself; his features, though still animated, recovered their habitual expression of mildness and gentleness; he started, drew his hand across his brow, looked round him, as if waking up from a deep reverie, and then, advancing toward Rodin, with an air as respectful as confused, he said to him, using the expression commonly applied to old men in his country, "Pardon me, father." Still following the customs of his nation,

so full of deference toward age, he took Rodin's hand to raise it to his lips, but the Jesuit drew back a step and refused this homage.

"For what do you ask pardon, my dear prince?" said he to Djalma.

"When you entered I was in a dream; I did not come to meet you. Once more, pardon me, father!"

"Once more, I forgive you with all my heart, my dear prince. But let us have some talk. Pray resume your place on the couch, and your pipe, too, if you like it."

But Djalma, instead of adopting the suggestion, and throwing himself on the divan, according to his custom, insisted on seating himself in a chair, notwithstanding all the persuasion of "the Old Man with the Good Heart," as he always called the Jesuit.

"Really, your politeness troubles me, my dear prince," said Rodin; "you are here at home in India; at least we wish you to think so."

"Many things remind me of my country," said Djalma, in a mild, grave tone. "Your goodness reminds me of my father, and of him who was a father to me," added the Indian, as he thought of Marshal Simon, whose arrival in Paris had been purposely concealed from him.

After a moment's silence, he resumed in a tone full of affectionate warmth, as he stretched out his hand to Rodin, "You are come, and I am happy!"

"I understand your joy, my dear prince, for I come to take you out of prison—to open your cage for you. I had begged you to submit to a brief seclusion, entirely for your own interest."

"Can I go out to-morrow?"

"To-day, my dear prince, if you please."

The young Indian reflected for a moment, and then resumed, "I must have friends, since I am here in a palace that does not belong to me."

"Certainly you have friends—excellent friends," answered Rodin. At these words, Djalma's countenance seemed to acquire fresh beauty. The most noble sentiments were expressed in his fine features: his large black eyes became slightly humid, and, after another interval of silence, he rose and said to Rodin, with emotion: "Come!"

"Whither, dear prince?" said the other, much surprised.

"To thank my friends. I have waited three days. It is long."

'Permit me, dear prince—I have much

to tell you on this subject—please to be seated."

Djalma resumed his seat with docility. Rodin continued: "It is true that you have friends; or, rather, you have a friend. Friends are rare."

"What are you?"

"Well, then, you have two friends, my dear prince—myself, whom you know, and one other, whom you do not know, and who desires to remain unknown to you."

"Why?"

"Why?" answered Rodin, after a moment's embarrassment. "Because the happiness he feels in giving you these proofs of his friendship and even his own tranquillity, depend upon preserving this mystery."

"Why should there be concealment when we do good?"

"Sometimes, to conceal the good we do, my dear prince."

"I profit by his friendship; why should he conceal himself from me?" These repeated questions of the young Indian appeared to puzzle Rodin, who, however, replied: "I have told you, my dear prince, that your secret friend would perhaps have his tranquillity compromised, if he were known."

"If he were known—as my friend?"

"Exactly so, dear prince."

The countenance of Djalma immediately assumed an appearance of sorrowful dignity; he raised his head proudly, and said in a stern and haughty voice: "Since this friend hides himself from me, he must either be ashamed of me, or there is reason for me to be ashamed of him. I only accept hospitality from those who are worthy of me, and who think me worthy of them. I leave this house." So saying, Djalma rose with such an air of determination, that Rodin exclaimed: "Listen to me, my dear prince. Allow me to tell you that your petulance and touchiness are almost incredible. Though we have endeavored to remind you of your beautiful country, we are here in Europe, in France, in the center of Paris. This consideration may perhaps a little modify your views. Listen to me, I conjure you."

Notwithstanding his complete ignorance of certain social conventionalisms, Djalma had too much good sense and uprightness not to appreciate reason, when it appeared reasonable. The words of Rodin calmed him. What that ingenuous modesty with which natures full of strength and generosity are almost always endowed, he an-

swered mildly: "You are right, father. I am no longer in my own country. Here the customs are different. I will reflect upon it."

Notwithstanding his craft and suppleness, Rodin sometimes found himself perplexed by the wild and unforeseen ideas of the young Indian. Thus he saw, to his great surprise, that Djalma now remained pensive for some minutes, after which he resumed in a calm but firm tone: "I have obeyed you, father; I have reflected."

"Well, my dear prince?"

"In no country in the world, under no pretext, should a man of honor conceal his friendship for another man of honor."

"But suppose there should be danger in avowing this friendship?" said Rodin, very uneasy at the turn the conversation was taking. Djalma eyed the Jesuit with contemptuous astonishment, and made no reply.

"I understand your silence, my dear prince: a brave man ought to defy danger. True; but if it should be you that the danger threatens, in case this friendship were discovered, would not your man of honor be excusable, even praiseworthy, to persist in remaining unknown?"

"I accept nothing from a friend who

thinks me capable of denying him from cowardice."

"Dear prince—listen to me."

"Adieu, father."

"Yet reflect!"

"I have said it," replied Djalma, in an abrupt and almost sovereign tone, as he walked toward the door.

"But suppose a woman were concerned?" cried Rodin, driven to extremity, and hastening after the young Indian, for he really feared that Djalma might rush from the house and thus overthrow all his projects.

At the last words of Rodin, the Indian stopped abruptly. "A woman!" said he, with a start, and turning red. "A woman is concerned?"

"Why, yes! suppose it were a woman," resumed Rodin, "would you not then understand her reserve, and the secrecy with which she is obliged to surround the marks of affection she wishes to give you?"

"A woman!" repeated Djalma, in a trembling voice, clasping his hands in adoration; and his beautiful countenance was expressive of the deepest emotion. "A woman!" said he again. "A Parisian?"

"Yes, my dear prince, as you force me to this indiscretion, I will confess to you

that your friend is a real Parisian—a noble matron, endowed with the highest virtues —whose age alone merits all your respect."

"She is very old, then?" cried poor Djalma, whose charming dream was thus abruptly dispelled.

"She may be a few years older than I am," answered Rodin, with an ironical smile, expecting to see the young man express a sort of comical disappointment or angry regret.

But it was not so. To the passionate enthusiasm of love, which had for a moment lighted up the prince's features, there now succeeded a respectful and touching expression. He looked at Rodin with emotion, and said to him in a broken voice: "This woman is, then, a mother to me?"

It is impossible to describe with what a pious, melancholy, and tender charm the Indian uttered the word mother.

"You have it, my dear prince; this respectable lady wishes to be a mother to you. But I may not reveal to you the cause of the affection she feels for you. Only, believe me—this affection is sincere and the cause honorable. If I do not tell you her secret, it is that, with us, the secrets of women, young or old, are equally sacred."

"That is right, and I will respect it. Without seeing her, I will love her—as I love God, without seeing Him."

"And now, my dear prince, let me tell you what are the intentions of your maternal friend. This house will remain at your disposal as long as you like it; French servants, a carriage, and horses, will be at your orders; the charges of your housekeeping will be paid for you. Then, as the son of a king should live royally, I have left in the next room a casket containing five hundred louis; every month a similar sum will be provided; if it should not be found sufficient for your little amusements, you will tell me, and it shall be augmented."

At a movement of Djalma, Rodin hastened to add: "I must tell you at once, my dear prince, that your delicacy may be quite at ease. First of all, you may accept anything from a mother; next, as in about three months you will come into possession of an immense inheritance, it will be easy for you, if you feel the obligation a burden—and the sum cannot exceed, at the most, four or five thousand louis—to repay these advances. Spare nothing, then, but satisfy all your fancies. You are expected to appear in the great world

of Paris in a style becoming the son of a king who was called the Father of the Generous. So once again I conjure you not to be restrained by a false delicacy; if this sum should not be sufficient—"

"I will ask for more. My mother is right; the son of a monarch ought to live royally."

Such was the answer of the Indian, made with perfect simplicity, and without any appearance of astonishment at these magnificent offers. This was natural. Djalma would have done for others what they were doing for him, for the traditions of the prodigal magnificence and splendid hospitality of Indian princes are well known. Djalma had been as moved as grateful, on hearing that a woman loved him with maternal affection. As for the luxury with which she sought to surround him, he accepted it without astonishment and without scruple. This resignation, again, somewhat disconcerted Rodin, who had prepared many excellent arguments to persuade the Indian to accept his offers.

"Well, then, it's all agreed, my dear prince," resumed the Jesuit. "Now, as you must see the world, it's just as well to enter by the best door, as we say. One of the friends of your maternal protectress,

the Count de Montbron, an old nobleman of the greatest experience, and belonging to the first society, will introduce you in some of the best houses in Paris."

"Will you not introduce me, father?"

"Alas! my dear prince, look at me. Tell me if you think I am fitted for such an office. No, no; I live alone and retired from the world. And then," added Rodin, after a short silence, fixing a penetrating, attentive, and curious look upon the prince, as if he would have subjected him to a sort of experiment by what follows, "and then, you see, M. de Montbron will be better able than I should, in the world you are about to enter, to enlighten you as to the snares that will be laid for you. For if you have friends, you have also enemies—cowardly enemies, as you know, who have abused your confidence in an infamous manner, and have made sport of you. And as, unfortunately, their power is equal to their wickedness, it would perhaps be more prudent in you to try to avoid them—to fly, instead of resisting them openly."

At the remembrance of his enemies, at the thought of flying from them, Djalma trembled in every limb; his features became of a livid paleness; his eyes wide open, so that the pupil was encircled with

white, sparkled with lurid fire; never had scorn, hatred, and the desire of vengeance, expressed themselves so terribly on a human face. His upper lip, blood-red, was curled convulsively, exposing a row of small, white, and close-set teeth, and giving to his countenance, lately so charming, an air of such animal ferocity, that Rodin started from his seat and exclaimed: "What is the matter, prince? You frighten me."

Djalma did not answer. Half leaning forward, with his hands clinched in rage, he seemed to cling to one of the arms of the chair, for fear of yielding to a burst of terrific fury. At this moment, the amber mouthpiece of his pipe rolled, by chance, under one of his feet; the violent tension, which contracted all the muscles of the young Indian, was so powerful, and, notwithstanding his youth and his light figure, he was endowed with such vigor, that with one abrupt stamp he powdered to dust the piece of amber, in spite of its extreme hardness.

"In the name of Heaven, what is the matter, prince?" cried Rodin.

"Thus would I crush my cowardly enemies!" exclaimed Djalma, with menacing and excited look. Then, as if these words

had brought his rage to a climax, he bounded from his seat, and, with haggard eyes, strode about the room for some seconds in all directions, as if he sought for some weapon, and uttered from time to time a hoarse cry, which he endeavored to stifle by thrusting his clinched fist against his mouth, while his jaws moved convulsively. It was the impotent rage of a wild beast, thirsting for blood. Yet, in all this, the young Indian preserved a great and savage beauty; it was evident that these instincts of sanguinary ardor and blind intrepidity, now excited to this pitch by horror of treachery and cowardice, when applied to war, or to those gigantic Indian hunts which are even more bloody than a battle, must make of Djalma what he really was—a hero.

Rodin admired, with deep and ominous joy, the fierce impetuosity of passion in the young Indian, for, under various conceivable circumstances, the effect must be terrible. Suddenly, to the Jesuit's great surprise, the tempest was appeased. Djalma's fury was calmed thus instantaneously, because reflection showed him how vain it was. Ashamed of his childish violence, he cast down his eyes. His countenance remained pale and gloomy; and, with a

cold tranquillity, far more formidable than the violence to which he had yielded, he said to Rodin: "Father, you will this day lead me to meet my enemies."

"To what end, my dear prince? What would you do?"

"Kill the cowards!"

"Kill them! you must not think of it."

"Faringhea will aid me."

"Remember, you are not on the banks of the Ganges, and here one does not kill an enemy like a hunted tiger."

"One fights with a loyal enemy, but one kills a traitor like an accursed dog," replied Djalma, with as much conviction as tranquillity.

"Ah, prince, whose father was the Father of the Generous," said Rodin, in a grave voice, "what pleasure can you find in striking down creatures as cowardly as they are wicked?"

"To destroy what is dangerous is a duty."

"So, prince, you seek for revenge?"

"I do not revenge myself on a serpent," said the Indian, with haughty bitterness; "I crush it."

"But, my dear prince, here we cannot get rid of our enemies in that manner. If we have cause of complaint—"

"Women and children complain," said Djalma, interrupting Rodin; "men strike."

"Still on the banks of the Ganges, my dear prince. Here, society takes your cause into its own hands, examines, judges, and if there be good reason, punishes."

"In my own quarrel, I am both judge and executioner."

"Pray listen to me: you have escaped the odious snares of your enemies, have you not? Well! suppose it were, thanks to the devotion of the venerable woman who has for you the tenderness of a mother, and that she were to ask you to forgive them—she, who saved you from their hands—what would you do then?"

The Indian hung his head, and was silent. Profiting by his hesitation, Rodin continued: "I might say to you that I know your enemies, but that in the dread of seeing you commit some terrible imprudence, I would conceal their names from you forever. But no! I swear to you, that if the respectable person, who loves you as her son, should find it either right or useful that I should tell you their names, I will do so—until she has pronounced, I must be silent."

Djalma looked at Rodin with a dark and wrathful air. At this moment, Faringhea

entered, and said to Rodin: "A man with a letter, not finding you at home, has been sent on here. Am I to receive it? He says it comes from the Abbe d'Aigrigny."

"Certainly," answered Rodin. "That is," he added, "with the prince's permission."

Djalma nodded in reply; Faringhea went out.

"You will excuse what I have done, dear prince. I expected this morning a very important letter. As it was late in coming to hand, I ordered it to be sent on."

A few minutes after, Faringhea returned with the letter, which he delivered to Rodin—and the half-caste again withdrew.

CHAPTER XLIV.

ADRIENNE AND DJALMA.

When Faringhea had quitted the room, Rodin took the letter from the Abbe d'Aigrigny with one hand, and with the other appeared to be looking for something, first in the side pocket of his greatcoat, then in the pocket behind, then in that of his trousers; and, not finding what he sought, he laid the letter on his knee, and felt himself

all over with both hands, with an air of regret and uneasiness. The divers movements of this pantomime, performed in the most natural manner, were crowned by the exclamations: "Oh! dear me! how vexatious!"

"What is the matter?" asked Djalma, starting from the gloomy silence in which he had been plunged for some minutes.

"Alas! my dear prince!" replied Rodin, "the most vulgar and puerile accident may sometimes cause the greatest inconvenience. I have forgotten or lost my spectacles. Now, in this twilight, with the very poor eyesight that years of labor have left me, it will be absolutely impossible for me to read this most important letter—and an immediate answer is expected—most simple and categorical—a yes or a no. Time presses; it is really most annoying. If," added Rodin, laying great stress on his words, without looking at Djalma, but so as the prince might remark it; "if only some one would render me the service to read it for me; but there is no one—no one."

"Father," said Djalma, obligingly, "shall I read it for you? When I have finished it I shall forget what I have read."

"You?" cried Rodin, as if the proposition of the Indian had appeared to him extravagant and dangerous; "it is impossible, prince, for you to read this letter."

"Then excuse my having offered," said Djalma, mildly.

"And yet," resumed Rodin, after a moment's reflection, and as if speaking to himself, "why not?"

And he added, addressing Djalma: "Would you really be so obliging, my dear prince? I should not have ventured to ask you this service."

So saying, Rodin delivered the letter to Djalma, who read aloud as follows:

"'Your visit this morning to Saint-Dizier House can only be considered, from what I hear, as a new act of aggression on your part.

"'Here is the last proposition I have to make. It may be as fruitless as the step I took yesterday, when I called upon you in the Rue Clovis.

"'After that long and painful explanation, I told you that I would write to you. I keep my promise, and here is my ultimatum.

"'First of all, a piece of advice. Beware! If you are determined to maintain so unequal a struggle, you will be exposed

even to the hatred of those whom you so foolishly seek to protect. There are a thousand ways to ruin you with them, by enlightening them as to your projects. It will be proved to them that you have shared in the plot, which you now pretend to reveal, not from generosity, but from cupidity.' "

Though Djalma had the delicacy to feel that the least question on the subject of this letter would be a serious indiscretion, he could not forbear turning his head suddenly toward the Jesuit, as he read the last passage.

"Oh, yes! it relates to me. Such as you see me, my dear prince," added he, glancing at his shabby clothes, "I am accused of cupidity."

"And who are these people that you protect?"

"Those I protect?" said Rodin, feigning some hesitation, as if he had been embarrassed to find an answer; "who are those I protect? Hem—hem—I will tell you. They are poor devils without resources; good people without a penny, having only a just cause on their side, in a lawsuit in which they are engaged. They are threatened with destruction by powerful parties—very powerful parties;

but, happily, these latter are known to me, and I am able to unmask them. What else could have been? Being myself poor and weak, I range myself naturally on the side of the poor and weak. But continue, I beg of you."

Djalma resumed:

" 'You have therefore everything to fear if you persist in your hostility, and nothing to gain by taking the side of those whom you call your friends. They might more justly be termed your dupes, for your disinterestedness would be inexplicable, were it sincere. It must therefore conceal some after-thought of cupidity.'

" 'Well, in that view of the case we can offer you ample compensation—with this difference, that your hopes are now entirely founded on the probable gratitude of your friends, a very doubtful chance at the best, whereas our offers will be realized on the instant. To speak clearly, this is what we ask, what we exact of you. This very night, before twelve, you must have left Paris, and engage not to return for six months.' " Djalma could not repress a movement of surprise, and looked at Rodin.

"Quite natural," said the latter; "the cause of my poor friends would be judged by that time, and I should be unable to

watch over them. You see how it is, my dear prince," added Rodin, with bitter indignation. "But please continue, and excuse me for having interrupted you; though, indeed, such impudence disgusts me."

Djalma continued: " 'That we may be certain of your removal from Paris for six months, you will go to the house of one of our friends in Germany. You will there be received with generous hospitality, but forcibly detained until the expiration of the term.' "

"Yes, yes! a voluntary prison," said Rodin.

" 'On these conditions, you will receive a pension of one thousand francs a month, to begin from your departure from Paris, ten thousand francs down, and twenty thousand at the end of the six months—the whole to be completely secured to you. Finally, at the end of the six months, we will place you in a position both honorable and independent.' "

Djalma, having stopped short with involuntary indignation, Rodin said to him: "Let me beg you to continue, my dear prince. Read to the end, and it will give you some idea of what passes in the midst of our civilization."

Djalma resumed: "'You know well enough the course of affairs, and what we are, to feel that in providing for your absence we only wish to get rid of an enemy, not very dangerous, but rather troublesome. Do not be blinded by your first success. The results of your denunciation will be stifled, because they are calumnious. The judge who received your evidence will soon repent his odious partiality. You may make what use you please of this letter. We know what we write, to whom we write, and how we write. You will receive this letter at three o'clock; if by four o'clock we have not your full and complete acceptance, written with your own hand at the bottom of this letter, war must commence between us—and not from to-morrow, but on the instant.'"

Having finished reading the letter, Djalma looked at Rodin, who said to him: "Permit me to summon Faringhea."

He rang the bell, and the half-caste appeared. Rodin took the letter from the hands of Djalma, tore it into halves, rubbed it between his palms, so as to make a sort of a ball, and said to the half-caste, as he returned it to him: "Give this paper to the person who waits for it, and tell him that is my only answer to his shameless and

insolent letter; you understand me—his shameless and insolent letter."

"I understand," said the half-caste; and he went out.

"This will perhaps be dangerous war for you, father," said the Indian, with interest.

"Yes, dear prince, it may be dangerous, but I am not like you; I have no wish to kill my enemies, because they are cowardly and wicked. I fight them under the shield of the law. Imitate me in this." Then, seeing that the countenance of Djalma darkened, he added: "I am wrong. I will advise you no more on this subject. Only, let us defer the decision to the judgment of your noble and motherly protectress. I shall see her to-morrow; if she consents, I will tell you the names of your enemies. If not—not."

"And this woman, this second mother," said Djalma, "is her character such that I can rely on her judgment?"

"She?" cried Rodin, clasping his hands and speaking with increased excitement. "Why, she is the most noble, the most generous, the most valiant being upon earth!—Why, if you were really her son, and she loved you with all the strength of maternal affection, and a case arose in

which you had to choose between an act of baseness and death, she would say to you: 'Die!' though she might herself die with you."

"Oh, noble woman! so was my mother!" cried Djalma, with enthusiasm.

"Yes," resumed Rodin, with growing energy, as he approached the window concealed by the shade, toward which he threw an oblique and anxious glance, "if you would imagine your protectress, think only of courage, uprightness, and loyalty personified. Oh! she has the chivalrous frankness of the brave man, joined with the high-souled dignity of the woman, who not only never in her life told a falsehood, never concealed a single thought, but who would rather die than give way to the least of those sentiments of craft and dissimulation which are almost forced upon ordinary women by the situation in which they are placed."

It is difficult to express the admiration which shone upon the countenance of Djalma as he listened to this description. His eyes sparkled, his cheeks glowed, his heart palpitated with enthusiasm.

"That is well, noble heart!" said Rodin to him, drawing still nearer to the blind; "I love to see your soul sparkle through

your eyes on hearing me speak thus of your unknown protectress. Oh! but she is worthy of the pious adoration which noble hearts and great characters inspire!"

"Oh! I believe you," cried Djalma, with enthusiasm; "my heart is full of admiration and also of astonishment; for my mother is no more, and yet such a woman exists!"

"Yes, she exists. For the consolation of the afflicted, for the glory of her sex, she exists. For the honor of truth, and the shame of falsehood, she exists. No lie, no disguise, has ever tainted her loyalty, brilliant and heroic as the sword of a knight. It is but a few days ago that this noble woman spoke to me these admirable words, which, in all my life, I shall not forget: 'Sir,' said she, 'if ever I suspect any one that I love or esteem—' "

Rodin did not finish. The shade, so violently shaken that the spring broke, was drawn up abruptly, and, to the great astonishment of Djalma, Mdlle. de Cardoville appeared before him. Adrienne's cloak had fallen from her shoulders, and in the violence of the movement with which she had approached the blind, her bonnet, the strings of which were untied, had also fallen. Having left home suddenly, with

only just time to throw a mantle over the picturesque and charming costume which she often chose to wear when alone, she appeared so radiant with beauty to Djalma's dazzled eyes, in the center of those leaves and flowers, that the Indian believed himself under the influence of a dream.

With clasped hands, eyes wide open, the body slightly bent forward, as if in the act of prayer, he stood petrified with admiration. Mdlle. de Cardoville, much agitated, and her countenance glowing with emotion, remained on the threshold of the greenhouse, without entering the room. All this had passed in less time than it takes to describe it. Hardly had the blind been raised, than Rodin, feigning surprise, exclaimed: "You here, madame?"

"Oh, sir!" said Adrienne, in an agitated voice, "I come to terminate the phrase which you have commenced. I told you that when a suspicion crossed my mind, I uttered it aloud to the person by whom it was inspired. Well! I confess it: I have failed in this honesty. I came here as a spy upon you, when your answer to the Abbe d'Aigrigny was giving me a new pledge of your devotion and sincerity. I doubted your uprightness at the moment when you were bearing testimony to my

frankness. For the first time in my life, I stooped to deceit; this weakness merits punishment, and I submit to it—demands reparation, and I make it—calls for apologies, and I tender them to you." Then, turning toward Djalma, she added, "Now, prince, I am no longer mistress of my secret. I am your relation, Mdlle. de Cardoville; and I hope you will accept from a sister the hospitality that you did not refuse from a mother."

Djalma made no reply. Plunged in ecstatic contemplation of this sudden apparition, which surpassed his wildest and most dazzling visions, he felt a sort of intoxication, which, paralyzing the power of thought, concentrated all his faculties in the one sense of sight; and just as we sometimes seek in vain to satisfy unquenchable thirst, the burning look of the Indian sought, as it were, with devouring avidity, to take in all the rare perfections of the young lady. Verily, never had two more divine types of beauty met face to face. Adrienne and Djalma were the very ideal of a handsome youth and maiden. There seemed to be something providential in the meeting of these two natures, so young and so vivacious, so generous and so full of passion, so heroic and so proud,

who, before coming into contact, had, singularly enough, each learned the moral worth of the other; for if, at the words of Rodin, Djalma had felt arise in his heart an admiration, as lively as it was sudden, for the valiant and generous qualities of that unknown benefactress, whom he now discovered in Mdlle. de Cardoville, the latter had, in her turn, been moved, affected, almost terrified, by the interview she had just overheard, in which Djalma had displayed the nobleness of his soul, the delicate goodness of his heart, and the terrible transports of his temper. Then she had not been able to repress a movement of astonishment, almost admiration, at sight of the surprising beauty of the prince; and soon after, a strange, painful sentiment, a sort of electric shock, seemed to penetrate all her being, as her eyes encountered Djalma's.

Cruelly agitated, and suffering deeply from this agitation, she tried to dissemble the impression she had received, by addressing Rodin, to apologize for having suspected him. But the obstinate silence of the Indian redoubled the lady's painful embarrassment. Again, raising her eyes toward the prince, to invite him to respond to her fraternal offer, she met his ardent

gaze wildly fixed upon her, and she looked once more with a mixture of fear, sadness, and wounded pride; then she congratulated herself on having foreseen the inexorable necessity of keeping Djalma at a distance from her, such apprehension did this ardent and impetuous nature already inspire. Wishing to put an end to her present painful situation, she said to Rodin, in a low and trembling voice: "Pray, sir, speak to the prince; repeat to him my offers. I cannot remain longer." So saying, Adrienne turned, as if to rejoin Florine. But, at the first step, Djalma sprang toward her with the bound of a tiger about to be deprived of his prey. Terrified by the expression of wild excitement which inflamed the Indian's countenance, the young lady drew back with a loud scream.

At this, Djalma remembered himself, and all that had passed. Pale with regret and shame, trembling, dismayed, his eyes streaming with tears, and all his features marked with an expression of the most touching despair, he fell at Adrienne's feet, and lifting his clasped hands toward her, said in a soft, supplicating, timid voice: "Oh, remain! remain! do not leave me. I have waited for you so long!" To this prayer, uttered with the timid simplicity of

a child, and a resignation which contrasted strangely with the savage violence that had so frightened Adrienne, she replied, as she made a sign to Florine to prepare for their departure: "Prince, it is impossible for me to remain longer here."

"But you will return?" said Djalma, striving to restrain his tears. "I shall see you again?"

"Oh, no! never—never!" said Mdlle. de Cardoville, in a failing voice. Then, profiting by the stupor into which her answer had thrown Djalma, Adrienne disappeared rapidly behind the plants in the greenhouse.

Florine was hastening to rejoin her mistress, when, just at the moment she passed before Rodin, he said to her in a low, quick voice: "To-morrow we must finish with the hunchback." Florine trembled in every limb, and, without answering Rodin, disappeared, like her mistress, behind the plants. Broken, overpowered, Djalma remained upon his knees, with his head resting on his breast. His countenance expressed neither rage nor excitement, but a painful stupor; he wept silently. Seeing Rodin approach him, he rose, but with so tremulous a step that he could hardly reach the divan, on which he sunk down, hiding his face in his hands.

Then Rodin, advancing, said to him in a mild and insinuating tone: "Alas! I feared what has happened. I did not wish you to see your benefactress; and if I told you she was old, do you know why, dear prince?"

Djalma, without answering, let his hands fall upon his knees, and turned toward Rodin a countenance still bathed in tears.

"I knew that Mdlle. de Cardoville was charming, and at your age it is so easy to fall in love," continued Rodin; "I wished to spare you that misfortune, my dear prince, for your beautiful protectress passionately loves a handsome young man of this town."

Upon these words, Djalma suddenly pressed both hands to his heart, as if he felt a piercing stab, uttered a cry of savage grief, threw back his head, and fell fainting upon the divan.

Rodin looked at him coldly for some seconds, and then said, as he went away, brushing his old hat with his elbow: "Come! it works—it works!"

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CHAPTER XLV.

THE CONSULTATION.

It is night. It has just struck nine. It is the evening of that day on which Mdlle. de Cardoville first found herself in presence of Djalma. Florine, pale, agitated, trembling, with a candle in her hand, had just entered a bedroom, plainly but comfortably furnished. This room was one of the apartments occupied by Mother Bunch, in Adrienne's house. They were situated on the ground-floor, and had two entrances. One opened on the garden and the other on the courtyard. From this side came the persons who applied to the work-girl for succor; an ante-chamber in which they waited, a parlor in which they were received, constituted Mother Bunch's apartments, along with the bedroom, which Florine had just entered, looking about her with an anxious and alarmed air, scarcely touching the carpet with the tips of her satin shoes, holding her breath, and listening at the least noise.

Placing the candle upon the chimney-piece, she took a rapid survey of the cham-

ber, and approached the mahogany desk, surmounted by a well-filled bookcase. The key had been left in the drawers of this piece of furniture, and they were all three examined by Florine. They contained different petitions from persons in distress, and various notes in the girl's handwriting. That was not what Florine wanted. Three card-board boxes were placed in pigeon-holes beneath the bookcase. These also were vainly explored, and Florine, with a gesture of vexation, looked and listened anxiously; then, seeing a chest of drawers, she made therein a fresh and useless search. Near the foot of the bed was a little door, leading to a dressing-room. Florine entered it, and looked—at first without success—into a large wardrobe, in which were suspended several black dresses, recently made for Mother Bunch, by order of Mdlle. de Cardoville. Perceiving, at the bottom of this wardrobe, half hidden beneath a cloak, a very shabby little trunk, Florine opened it hastily and found there, carefully folded up, the poor old garments in which the work-girl had been clad when she first entered this opulent mansion.

Florine started—an involuntary emotion contracted her features; but considering that she had not liberty to indulge her feel-

ings, but only to obey Rodin's implacable orders, she hastily closed both trunk and wardrobe, and leaving the dressing-room, returned into the bed-chamber. After having again examined the writing-stand, a sudden idea occurred to her. Not content with once more searching the card-board boxes, she drew out one of them from the pigeon-hole, hoping to find what she sought behind the box; her first attempt failed, but the second was more successful. She found behind the middle box a copy-book of considerable thickness. She started in surprise, for she had expected something else; yet she took the manuscript, opened it, and rapidly turned over the leaves. After having perused several pages, she manifested her satisfaction, and seemed as if about to put the book in her pocket; but after a moment's reflection, she replaced it where she had found it, arranged everything in order, took her candle, and quitted the apartment without being discovered—of which, indeed, she had felt pretty sure, knowing that Mother Bunch would be occupied with Mdlle. de Cardoville for some hours.

. . . . . .

The day after Florine's researches, Mother Bunch, alone in her bedchamber,

was seated in an armchair, close to a good fire. A thick carpet covered the floor; through the window-curtains could be seen the lawn of a large garden; the deep silence was only interrupted by the regular ticking of a clock and the crackling of the wood. Her hands resting on the arms of the chair, she gave way to a feeling of happiness such as she had never so completely enjoyed since she took up her residence at the hotel. For her, accustomed so long to cruel privations, there was a kind of inexpressible charm in the calm silence of this retreat—in the cheerful aspect of the garden, and, above all, in the consciousness that she was indebted for this comfortable position to the resignation and energy she had displayed in the thick of the many severe trials which now ended so happily. An old woman, with a mild and friendly countenance, who had been, by express desire of Adrienne, attached to the hunchback's service, entered the room, and said to her: "Mademoiselle, a young man wishes to speak to you on pressing business. He gives his name as Agricola Baudoin."

At this name, Mother Bunch uttered an exclamation of surprise and joy, blushed slightly, rose and ran to the door which

led to the parlor in which was Agricola.

"Good-morning, dear sister," said the smith, cordially embracing the young girl, whose cheeks burned crimson beneath those fraternal kisses.

"Ah, me!" cried the seamstress on a sudden, as she looked anxiously at Agricola; "what is that black band on your forehead? You have been wounded!"

"A mere nothing," said the smith, "really nothing. Do not think of it. I will tell you all about that presently. But first, I have things of importance to communicate."

"Come into my room, then; we shall be alone," said Mother Bunch, as she went before Agricola.

Notwithstanding the expression of uneasiness which was visible on the countenance of Agricola, he could not forbear smiling with pleasure as he entered the room, and looked around him.

"Excellent, my poor sister! this is how I would always have you lodged; I recognize here the hand of Mdlle. de Cardoville. What a heart! what a noble mind!—Dost know, she wrote to me the day before yesterday, to thank me for what I had done for her, and sent me a gold pin (very plain), which she said I need not hesitate to ac-

cept, as it had no other value but that of having been worn by her mother! You can't tell how much I was affected by the delicacy of this gift!"

"Nothing must astonish you from a heart like hers," answered the hunchback.

"But the wound—the wound!"

"Presently, my good sister; I have so many things to tell you. Let us begin by what is most pressing, for I want you to give me some good advice in a very serious case. You know how much confidence I have in your excellent heart and judgment. And then, I have to ask of you a service—oh! a great service," added the smith, in an earnest, and almost solemn tone, which astonished his hearer. "Let us begin with what is not personal to myself."

"Speak quickly."

"Since my mother went with Gabriel to the little country curacy he has obtained, and since my father lodges with Marshal Simon and the young ladies, I have resided, you know, with my mates at M. Hardy's factory, in the common dwelling-house. Now, this morning—but first, I must tell you that M. Hardy, who has lately returned from a journey, is again absent for a few days on business. This

morning, then, at the hour of breakfast, I remained at work a little after the last stroke of the bell; I was leaving the workshop to go to our eating-room, when I saw entering the courtyard a lady who had just got out of a hackney-coach. I remarked that she was fair, though her veil was half down; she had a mild and pretty countenance, and her dress was that of a fashionable lady. Struck with her paleness, and her anxious, frightened air, I asked her if she wanted anything. 'Sir,' said she to me, in a trembling voice, and as if with a great effort, 'do you belong to this factory?'—'Yes, madame.'—'M. Hardy is then in danger?' she exclaimed. —'M. Hardy, madame? He has not yet returned home.'—'What!' she went on, 'M. Hardy did not come hither yesterday evening? Was he not dangerously wounded by some of the machinery?' As she said these words, the poor young lady's lips trembled, and I saw large tears standing in her eyes. 'Thank God, madame! all this is entirely false,' said I, 'for M. Hardy has not returned, and indeed is only expected by to-morrow or the day after.'—'You are quite sure that he has not returned? quite sure that he is not hurt?' resumed the pretty young lady, drying her

eyes.—'Quite sure, madame; if M. Hardy were in danger, I should not be so quiet in talking to you about him.'—'Oh! thank God! thank God!' cried the young lady. Then she expressed to me her gratitude, with so happy, so feeling an air, that I was quite touched by it. But suddenly, as if then only she felt ashamed of the step she had taken, she let down her veil, left me precipitately, went out of the courtyard, and got once more into the hackney-coach that had brought her. I said to myself, 'This is a lady who takes great interest in M. Hardy, and has been alarmed by a false report.' "

"She loves him, doubtless," said Mother Bunch, much moved, "and in her anxiety she perhaps committed an act of imprudence in coming to inquire after him."

"It is only too true. I saw her get into the coach with interest, for her emotion had infected me. The coach started—and what did I see a few seconds after? A cab, which the young lady could not have perceived, for it had been hidden by an angle of the wall; and as it turned round the corner, I distinguished perfectly a man seated by the driver's side, and making signs to him to take the same road as the hackney-coach."

"The poor young lady was followed," said Mother Bunch, anxiously.

"No doubt of it; so I instantly hastened after the coach, reached it, and through the blinds that were let down, I said to the young lady, while I kept running by the side of the coach-door: 'Take care, madame; you are followed by a cab.'"

"Well, Agricola! and what did she answer?"

"I heard her exclaim, 'Great Heaven!' with an accent of despair. The coach continued its course. The cab soon came up with me; I saw, by the side of the driver, a great, fat, ruddy man, who, having watched me running after the coach, no doubt suspected something, for he looked at me somewhat uneasily."

"And when does M. Hardy return?" asked the hunchback.

"To-morrow, or the day after. Now, my good sister, advise me. It is evident that this young lady loves M. Hardy. She is probably married, for she looked so embarrassed when she spoke to me, and she uttered a cry of terror on learning that she was followed. What shall I do? I wished to ask advice of Father Simon, but he is so very strict in such matters—and then a love affair, at his age!—while you

are so delicate and sensible, my good sister, that you will understand it all."

The girl started and smiled bitterly; Agricola did not perceive it, and thus continued: "So I said to myself, 'There is only Mother Bunch who can give me good advice.' Suppose M. Hardy returns to-morrow, shall I tell him what has passed or not?"

"Wait a moment," cried the other, suddenly interrupting Agricola, and appearing to recollect something; "when I went to St. Mary's Convent, to ask for work of the superior, she proposed that I should be employed by the day, in a house in which I was to watch, or, in other words to act as a spy—"

"What a wretch!"

"And do you know," said the girl, "with whom I was to begin this odious trade? Why, with a Madame de—Fremont, or de Bremont, I do not remember which, a very religious woman, whose daughter, a young married lady, received visits a great deal too frequent (according to the superior) from a certain manufacturer."

"What do you say?" cried Agricola. "This manufacturer must be—"

"M. Hardy. I had too many reasons to remember that name when it was pro-

nounced by the superior. Since that day, so many other events have taken place that I had almost forgotten the circumstance. But it is probable that this young lady is the one of whom I heard speak at the convent."

"And what interest had the superior of the convent to set a spy upon her?" asked the smith.

"I do not know; but it is clear that the same interest still exists, since the young lady was followed, and perhaps, at this hour, is discovered and dishonored. Oh! it is dreadful!" Then, seeing Agricola start suddenly, Mother Bunch added: "What, then, is the matter?"

"Yes—why not?" said the smith, speaking to himself; "why may not all this be the work of the same hand? The superior of a convent may have a private understanding with an abbe—but, then, for what end?"

"Explain yourself, Agricola," said the girl. "And then—where did you get your wound? Tell me that, I conjure you."

"It is of my wound that I am just going to speak; for, in truth, the more I think of it, the more this adventure of the young lady seems to connect itself with other facts."

"How so?"

"You must know that, for the last few days, singular things are passing in the neighborhood of our factory. First, as we are in Lent, an abbe from Paris (a tall, fine-looking man, they say) has come to preach in the little village of Villiers, which is only a quarter of a league from our works. The abbe has found occasion to slander and attack M. Hardy in his sermons."

"How is that?"

"M. Hardy has printed certain rules with regard to our work, and the rights and benefits he grants us. These rules are followed by various maxims as noble as they are simple, with precepts of brotherly love such as all the world can understand, extracted from different philosophies and different religions. But because M. Hardy has chosen what is best in all religions, the abbe concludes that M. Hardy has no religion at all, and he has therefore not only attacked him for this in the pulpit, but has denounced our factory as a center of perdition and damnable corruption, because, on Sundays, instead of going to listen to his sermons, or to drink at a tavern, our comrades, with their wives and children, pass their time in cultivating their little gar-

dens, in reading, singing in chorus, or dancing together in the common dwelling-house. The abbe has even gone so far as to say that the neighborhood of such an assemblage of atheists, as he calls us, might draw down the anger of Heaven upon the country—that the hovering of cholera was much talked of, and that very possibly, thanks to our impious presence, the plague might fall upon all our neighborhood."

"But to tell such things to ignorant people," exclaimed Mother Bunch, "is likely to excite them to fatal actions."

"That is just what the abbe wants."

"What do you tell me?"

"The people of the environs, still more excited, no doubt, by other agitators, show themselves hostile to the workmen of our factory. Their hatred, or at least their envy, has been turned to account. Seeing us live all together, well lodged, well warmed, and comfortably clad, active, gay, and laborious, their jealousy has been imbittered by the sermons, and by the secret maneuvers of some depraved characters, who are known to be bad workmen, in the employment of M. Tripeaud, our opposition. All this excitement is beginning to bear fruit; there have been al-

ready two or three fights between us and our neighbors. It was in one of these skirmishes that I received a blow with a stone on my head."

"Is it not serious, Agricola?—are you quite sure?" said Mother Bunch anxiously.

"It is nothing at all, I tell you. But the enemies of M. Hardy have not confined themselves to preaching. They have brought into play something far more dangerous."

"What is that?"

"I, and nearly all my comrades, did our part in the three Revolutionary days of July; but we are not eager at present, for good reasons, to take up arms again. That is not everybody's opinion; well, we do not blame others, but we have our own ideas; and Father Simon, who is as brave as his son, and as good a patriot as any one, approves and directs us. Now, for some days past, we find all about the factory, in the garden, in the courts, printed papers to this effect: 'You are selfish cowards; because chance has given you a good master, you remain indifferent to the misfortunes of your brothers, and to the means of freeing them; material comforts have enervated your hearts.'"

"Dear me, Agricola! what frightful perseverance in wickedness!"

"Yes! and unfortunately these devices have their effect on some of our younger mates. As the appeal was, after all, to proud and generous sentiments, it has had some influence. Already, seeds of division have shown themselves in our workshops, where before all were united as brothers. A secret agitation now reigns there. Cold suspicion takes the place, with some, of our accustomed cordiality. Now, if I tell you that I am nearly sure these printed papers, thrown over the walls of our factory, to raise these little sparks of discord among us, have been scattered about by the emissaries of this same preaching abbe —would it not seem from all this, taken in conjunction with what happened this morning to the young lady, that M. Hardy has of late numerous enemies?"

"Like you, I think it very fearful, Agricola," said the girl; "and it is so serious that M. Hardy alone can take a proper decision on the subject. As for what happened this morning to the young lady, it appears to me that, immediately on M. Hardy's return, you should ask for an interview with him, and, however delicate such a communication may be, tell him all that passed."

"There is the difficulty. Shall I not

seem as if wishing to pry into his secrets?"

"If the young lady had not been followed, I should have shared your scruples. But she was watched, and is evidently in danger. It is, therefore, in my opinion, your duty to 'warn M. Hardy. Suppose (which is not improbable) that the lady is married; would it not be better, for a thousand reasons, that M. Hardy should know all?"

"You are right, my good sister; I will follow your advice. M. Hardy shall know everything. But now that we have spoken of others, I have to speak of myself—yes, of myself—for it concerns a matter on which may depend the happiness of my whole life," added the smith, in a tone of seriousness which struck his hearer. "You know," proceeded Agricola, after a moment's silence, "that, from my childhood, I have never concealed anything from you—that I have told you everything—absolutely everything?"

"I know it, Agricola, I know it," said the hunchback, stretching out her white slender hand to the smith, who grasped it cordially, and thus continued: "When I say everything, I am not quite exact—for I have always concealed from you my little love affairs—because, though we may

tell almost anything to a sister, there are subjects of which we ought not to speak to a good and virtuous girl, such as you are."

"I thank you, Agricola. I had remarked this reserve on your part," observed the other, casting down her eyes, and heroically repressing the grief she felt; "I thank you."

"But for the very reason that I made it a duty never to speak to you of such love affairs, I said to myself, if ever it should happen that I have a serious passion—such a love as makes one think of marriage—oh! then, just as we tell our sister even before our father and mother, my good sister shall be the first to be informed of it."

"You are very kind, Agricola."

"Well, then! the serious passion has come at last. I am over head and ears in love, and I think of marriage."

At these words of Agricola, poor Mother Bunch felt herself for an instant paralyzed. It seemed as if all her blood was suddenly frozen in her veins. For some seconds she thought she was going to die. Her heart ceased to beat; she felt it, not breaking, but melting away to nothing. Then, the first blasting emotion over, like

those martyrs who found in the very excitement of pain the terrible power to smile in the midst of tortures, the unfortunate girl found, in the fear of betraying the secret of her fatal and ridiculous love, almost incredible energy. She raised her head, looked at the smith calmly, almost serenely, and said to him in a firm voice:

"Ah! so, you truly love?"

"That is to say, my good sister, that for the last four days I scarcely live at all—or live only upon this passion."

"It is only since four days that you have been in love?"

"Not more—but time has nothing to do with it."

"And is *she* very pretty?"

"Dark hair—the figure of a nymph—fair as a lily—blue eyes, as large as that—and as mild, as good as your own."

"You flatter me, Agricola."

"No, no, it is Angela that I flatter—for that's her name. What a pretty one! Is it not, my good Mother Bunch?"

"A charming name," said the poor girl, contrasting bitterly that graceful appellation with her own nickname, which the thoughtless Agricola applied to her without thinking of it. Then she resumed,

with fearful calmness: "Angela? yes, it is a charming name!"

"Well, then! imagine to yourself that this name is not only suited to her face, but to her heart. In a word, I believe her heart to be almost equal to yours."

"She has my eyes—she has my heart," said Mother Bunch, smiling. "It is singular how alike we are."

Agricola did not perceive the irony of despair contained in these words. He resumed, with a tenderness as sincere as it was inexorable: "Do you think, my good girl, that I could ever have fallen seriously in love with any one who had not in character, heart, and mind much of you?"

"Come, brother," said the girl, smiling —yes, the unfortunate creature had the strength to smile; "come, brother, you are in a gallant vein to-day. Where did you make the acquaintance of this beautiful young person?"

"She is only the sister of one of my mates. Her mother is the head laundress in our common dwelling, and as she was in want of assistance, and we always take in preference the relations of members of the association, Mrs. Bertin (that's the mother's name) sent for her daughter from Lille, where she had been stopping

with one of her aunts, and, for the last five days, she has been in the laundry. The first evening I saw her, I passed three hours after work was over in talking with her and her mother and brother; and the next day I felt that my heart was gone; the day after that, the feeling was only stronger—and now I am quite mad about her, and resolved on marriage—according as you shall decide. Do not be surprised at this; everything depends upon you. I shall only ask my father and mother's leave after I have yours."

"I do not understand you, Agricola."

"You know the utter confidence I have in the incredible instinct of your heart. Many times you have said to me: 'Agricola, love this person, love that person, have confidence in that other'—and never yet were you deceived. Well! you must now render me the same service. You will ask permission of Mdlle. de Cardoville to absent yourself; I will take you to the factory: I have spoken of you to Mrs. Bertin and her daughter, as of a beloved sister; and, according to your impression at sight of Angela, I will declare myself or not. This may be childishness, or superstition, on my part; but I am so made."

"Be it so," answered Mother Bunch,

with heroic courage; "I will see Mdlle. Angela; I will tell you what I think of her—and that, mind you, sincerely."

"I know it. When will you come?"

"I must ask Mdlle. de Cardoville what day she can spare me. I will let you know."

"Thanks, my good sister!" said Agricola, warmly; then he added, with a smile: "Bring your best judgment with you—your full-dress judgment."

"Do not make a jest of it, brother!" said Mother Bunch, in a mild, sad voice; "it is a serious matter, for it concerns the happiness of your whole life."

At this moment a modest knock was heard at the door. "Come in," said Mother Bunch. Florine appeared.

"My mistress begs that you will come to her, if you are not engaged," said Florine to Mother Bunch.

The latter rose, and, addressing the smith, said to him: "Please wait a moment, Agricola. I will ask Mdlle. de Cardoville what day I can dispose of, and I will come and tell you." So saying, the girl went out, leaving Agricola with Florine.

"I should have much wished to pay my respects to Mdlle. de Cardoville," said

Agricola; "but I feared to intrude."

"My lady is not quite well, sir," said Florine, "and receives no one to-day. I am sure that, as soon as she is better, she will be quite pleased to see you."

Here Mother Bunch returned, and said to Agricola: "If you can come for me to-morrow, about three o'clock, so as not to lose the whole day, we will go to the factory, and you can bring me back in the evening."

"Then, at three o'clock to-morrow, my good sister."

"At three to-morrow, Agricola."

. . . . . .

The evening of that same day, when all was quiet in the hotel, Mother Bunch, who had remained till ten o'clock with Mdlle. de Cardoville, re-entered her bed-chamber, locked the door after her, and finding herself at length free and unrestrained, threw herself on her knees before a chair, and burst into tears. She wept long—very long. When her tears at length ceased to flow, she dried her eyes, approached the writing-desk, drew out one of the boxes from the pigeon-hole, and, taking from this hiding-place the manuscript which Florine had so rapidly glanced over the evening before, she wrote in it during a portion of the night.

CHAPTER XLVI.

MOTHER BUNCH'S DIARY.

We have said that the hunchback wrote during a portion of the night, in the book discovered the previous evening by Florine, who had not ventured to take it away, until she had informed the persons who employed her of its contents, and until she had received their final orders on the subject. Let us explain the existence of this manuscript, before opening it to the reader. The day on which Mother Bunch first became aware of her love for Agricola, the first word of this manuscript had been written. Endowed with an essentially trusting character, yet always feeling herself restrained by the dread of ridicule—a dread, which, in its painful exaggeration, was the work-girl's only weakness—to whom could the unfortunate creature have confided the secret of that fatal passion, if not to paper—that mute confidant of timid and suffering souls, that patient friend, silent and cold, who, if it makes no reply to heartrending complaints, at least always listens, and never forgets?

When her heart was overflowing with emotion, sometimes mild and sad, sometimes harsh and bitter, the poor work-girl, finding a melancholy charm in these dumb and solitary outpourings of the soul, now clothed in the form of simple and touching poetry, and now in unaffected prose, had accustomed herself by degrees not to confine her confidences to what immediately related to Agricola, for though he might be mixed up with all her thoughts, other reflections, which the sight of beauty, of happy love, of maternity, of wealth, of misfortune, called up within her, were so impressed with the influence of her unfortunate personal position, that she would not even have dared to communicate them to him. Such, then, was this journal of a poor daughter of the people, weak, deformed, and miserable, but endowed with an angelic soul, and a fine intellect, improved by reading, meditation, and solitude; pages quite unknown, which yet contained many deep and striking views, both as regards men and things, taken from the peculiar standpoint in which fate had placed this unfortunate creature. The following lines, here and there abruptly interrupted or stained with tears, according to the current of her various emotions,

on hearing of Agricola's deep love for Angela, formed the last pages of this journal:

"Friday, March 3, 1832.

"I spent the night without any painful dreams. This morning, I rose with no sorrowful presentiment. I was calm and tranquil when Agricola came. He did not appear to me agitated. He was simple and affectionate as he always is. He spoke to me of events relating to M. Hardy, and then, without transition, without hesitation, he said to me: 'The last four days I have been desperately in love. The sentiment is so serious that I think of marriage. I have come to consult you about it.' That was how this overwhelming revelation was made to me—naturally and cordially—I on one side of the hearth, and Agricola on the other, as if we had talked of indifferent things. And yet no more is needed to break one's heart. Some one enters, embraces you like a brother, sits down, talks —and then—Oh, merciful Heaven! my head wanders.

. . . . . .

"I feel calmer now. Courage, my poor heart, courage! Should a day of misfortune again overwhelm me I will read these lines written under the impression of the

most cruel grief I can ever feel, and I will say to myself: 'What is the present woe compared to that past?' My grief is indeed cruel! it is illegitimate, ridiculous, shameful; I should not dare to confess it even to the most indulgent of mothers. Alas! there are some fearful sorrows which yet rightly make men shrug their shoulders in pity or contempt. Alas! these are forbidden misfortunes. Agricola has asked me to go to-morrow, to see this young girl to whom he is so passionately attached, and whom he will marry, if the instinct of my heart should approve the marriage. This thought is the most painful of all those which have tortured me, since he so pitilessly announced this love. Pitilessly? No, Agricola—no, my brother—forgive me this unjust cry of pain. Is it that you know, can even suspect, that I love you better than you love, better than you can ever love, this charming creature?

"'Dark-haired—the figure of a nymph—fair as a lily—with blue eyes—as large as that—and almost as mild as your own.'

"That is the portrait he drew of her. Poor Agricola! how would he have suffered, had he known that every one of his words was tearing my heart! Never did I so strongly feel the deep commiseration

and tender pity, inspired by a good, affectionate being, who, in the sincerity of his ignorance, gives you your death-wound with a smile. We do not blame him—no—we pity him to the full extent of the grief that he would feel on learning the pain he had caused us. It is strange! but never did Agricola appear to me more handsome than this morning. His manly countenance was slightly agitated, as he spoke of the uneasiness of that pretty young lady. As I listened to him describing the agony of a woman who runs the risk of ruin for the man she loves, I felt my heart beat violently, my hands were burning, a soft languor floated over me—Ridiculous folly! As if I had any right to feel thus!

"I remember that, while he spoke, I cast a rapid glance at the glass. I felt proud that I was so well dressed; he had not even remarked it; but no matter — it seemed to me that my cap became me, that my hair shone finely, my gaze beamed mild—I found Agricola so handsome that I almost began to think myself less ugly—no doubt, to excuse myself in my own eyes for daring to love him. After all, what happened to-day would have happened one day or another! Yes, that is consoling—like the thoughts that death is

nothing, because it must come at last—to those who are in love with life! I have been always preserved from suicide—the last resource of the unfortunate, who prefer trusting in God to remaining among his creatures—by the sense of duty. One must not only think of self. And I reflected also—'God is good—always good—since the most wretched beings find opportunities for love and devotion.' How is it that I, so weak and poor, have always found means to be helpful and useful to some one?

"This very day I felt tempted to make an end with life—Agricola and his mother had no longer need of me. Yes, but the unfortunate creatures whom Mdlle. de Cardoville has commissioned me to watch over? but my benefactress herself, though she has affectionately reproached me with the tenacity of my suspicions in regard to that man? I am more than ever alarmed for her—I feel that she is more than ever in danger—more than ever, I have faith in the value of my presence near her. Hence, I must live. Live—to go to-morrow to see this girl, whom Agricola passionately loves? Good Heaven! why have I always known grief, and never hate? There must be a bitter pleasure in hating.

So many people hate! Perhaps I may hate this girl—Angela, as he called her, when he said, with so much simplicity: 'A charming name, is it not, Mother Bunch?' Compare this name, which recalls an idea so full of grace, with the ironical symbol of my witch's deformity! Poor Agricola! poor brother! goodness is sometimes as blind as malice, I see. Should I hate this young girl? Why? Did she deprive me of the beauty which charms Agricola? Can I find fault with her for being beautiful? When I was not yet accustomed to the consequences of my ugliness, I asked myself, with bitter curiosity, why the Creator had endowed his creatures so unequally. The habit of pain has allowed me to reflect calmly, and I have finished by persuading myself, that to beauty and ugliness are attached the two most noble emotions of the soul—admiration and compassion. Those who are like me admire beautiful persons—such as Angela, such as Agricola—and these in their turn feel a touching pity for such as I am. Sometimes, in spite of one's self, one has very foolish hopes. Because Agricola, from a feeling of propriety, had never spoken to me of his love affairs, I sometimes persuaded myself that he had none

—that he loved me, and that the fear of ridicule alone was with him, as with me, an obstacle in the way of confessing it. Yes, I have even made verses on that subject—and those, I think, not the worst I have written.

"Mine is a singular position! If I love, I am ridiculous; if any love me, he is still more ridiculous. How did I come so to forget that, as to have suffered and to suffer what I do? But blessed be that suffering, since it has not engendered hate —no; for I will not hate this girl—I will perform a sister's part to the last; I will follow the guidance of my heart; I have the instinct of preserving others—my heart will lead and enlighten me. My only fear is, that I shall burst into tears when I see her, and not be able to conquer my emotion. Oh, then! what a revelation to Agricola—a discovery of the mad love he has inspired! Oh, never! the day in which he knew that would be the last of my life. There would then be within me something stronger than duty—the longing to escape from shame—that incurable shame that burns me like a hot iron. No, no; I will be calm. Besides, did I not just now, when with him, bear courageously a terrible trial? I will be calm. My personal

feelings must not darken the second-sight, so clear for those I love. Oh! painful, painful task! for the fear of yielding involuntarily to evil sentiments must not render me too indulgent toward this girl. I might compromise Agricola's happiness, since my decision is to guide his choice. Poor creature that I am! How I deceive myself! Agricola asks my advice, because he thinks that I shall not have the melancholy courage to oppose his passion; or else he would say to me: 'No matter—I love; and I brave the future!'

"But then, if my advice, if the instincts of my heart, are not to guide him—if his resolution is taken beforehand—of what use will be to-morrow's painful mission? Of what use? To obey him. Did he not say—'Come!' In thinking of my devotion for him, how many times, in the secret depths of my heart, I have asked myself if the thought had ever occurred to him to love me otherwise than as a sister; if it had ever struck him, what a devoted wife he would have in me! And why should it have occurred to him? As long as he wished, as long as he may still wish, I have been, and I shall be, as devoted to him as if I were his wife, sister, or mother. Why should he desire what he already possesses?

"Married to him—oh, God! the dream is mad as ineffable. Are not such thoughts of celestial sweetness—which include all sentiments from sisterly to maternal love—forbidden to me, on pain of ridicule as distressing as if I wore dresses and ornaments that my ugliness and deformity would render absurd? I wonder, if I were now plunged into the most cruel distress, whether I should suffer as much as I do on hearing of Agricola's intended marriage? Would hunger, cold or misery diminish this dreadful dolor? or is it the dread pain that would make me forget hunger, cold and misery?

"No, no; this irony is bitter. It is not well in me to speak thus? Why such deep grief? In what way have the affection, the esteem, the respect of Agricola, changed toward me? I complain—but how would it be, kind Heaven! if, as, alas! too often happens, I were beautiful, loving, devoted, and he had chosen another, less beautiful, less loving, less devoted? Should I not be a thousand times more unhappy? for then I might, I would have to blame him—while now I can find no fault with him, for never having thought of a union which was impossible, because ridiculous. And had he wished it, could I ever have had

the selfishness to consent to it? I began to write the first pages of this diary, as I began these last, with my heart steeped in bitterness—and as I went on, committing to paper what I could have intrusted to no one, my soul grew calm, till Resignation came—Resignation, my chosen saint, who, smiling through her tears, suffers and loves, but hopes—never!"

. . . . . .

These words were the last in the journal. It was clear, from the blots of abundant tears, that the unfortunate creature had often paused to weep.

In truth, worn out by so many emotions, Mother Bunch, late in the night, had replaced the book behind the cardboard box, not that she thought it safer there than elsewhere (she had no suspicion of the slightest need for such precaution), because it was more out of the way there than in any of the drawers, which she frequently opened in presence of other people. Determined to perform her courageous promise, and worthily accomplish her task to the end, she waited the next day for Agricola, and, firm in her heroic resolution, went with the smith to M. Hardy's factory. Florine, informed of her departure, but detained a portion of the day in attend-

ance on Mdlle. de Cardoville, preferred waiting for night to perform the new orders she had asked and received, since she had communicated by letter the contents of Mother Bunch's journal. Certain not to be surprised, she entered the work-girl's chamber, as soon as the night was come. Knowing the place where she should find the manuscript, she went straight to the desk, took out the box, and then, drawing from her pocket a sealed letter, prepared to leave it in the place of the manuscript, which she was to carry away with her. So doing, she trembled so much that she was obliged to support herself an instant by the table. Every good sentiment was not extinct in Florine's heart; she obeyed passively the orders she received, but she felt painfullly how horrible and infamous was her conduct. If only herself had been concerned, she would no doubt have had the courage to risk all, rather than submit to this odious despotism; but unfortunately, it was not so, and her ruin would have caused the mortal despair of another person whom she loved better than life itself. She resigned herself, therefore, not without cruel anguish, to abominable treachery.

Though she hardly ever knew for what

end she acted, and this was particularly the case with regard to the abstraction of the journal, she foresaw vaguely that the substitution of this sealed letter for the manuscript would have fatal consequences for Mother Bunch, for she remembered Rodin's declaration, that "it was time to finish with the young seamstress."

What did he mean by those words? How would the letter that she was charged to put in the place of the diary contribute to bring about this result? She did not know —but she understood that the clear-sighted devotion of the hunchback justly alarmed the enemies of Mdlle. de Cardoville, and that she (Florine) herself daily risked having her perfidy detected by the young needlewoman. This last fear put an end to the hesitations of Florine; she placed the letter behind the box, and hiding the manuscript under her apron, cautiously withdrew from the chamber.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE DIARY CONTINUED.

RETURNED into her own room, some hours after she had concealed there the manuscript abstracted from Mother Bunch's apartment, Florine yielded to her curiosity, and determined to look through it. She soon felt a growing interest, an involuntary emotion, as she read more of these private thoughts of the young seamstress. Among many pieces of verse, which all breathed a passionate love for Agricola—a love so deep, simple, and sincere, that Florine was touched by it, and forgot the author's deformity—among many pieces of verse, we say, were divers other fragments, thoughts, and narratives, relating to a variety of facts. We shall quote some of them, in order to explain the profound impression that their perusal made upon Florine.

Fragments from the Diary.

"This is my birthday. Until this evening, I had cherished a foolish hope. Yesterday, I went down to Mrs. Baudoin's,

to dress a little wound she had on her leg. When I entered the room, Agricola was there. No doubt he was talking of me to his mother, for they stopped when I came in, and exchanged a meaning smile. In passing by the drawers, I saw a paste-board box, with a pincushion-lid, and I felt myself blushing with joy as I thought this little present was destined for me; but I pretended not to see it. While I was on my knees before his mother, Agricola went out. I remarked that he took the little box with him. Never has Mrs. Baudoin been more tender and motherly than she was that morning. It appeared to me that she went to bed earlier than usual. 'It is to send me away sooner,' said I to myself, 'that I may enjoy the surprise Agricola has prepared for me.' How my heart beat, as I ran fast, very fast, up to my closet! I stopped a moment before open-ing the door, that my happiness might last the longer. At last I entered the room, my eyes swimming with tears of joy. I looked upon my table, my chair, my bed —there was nothing. The little box was not to be found. My heart sunk within me. Then I said to myself: 'It will be to-morrow—this is only the eve of my birthday.' The day is gone. Evening is

come. Nothing. The pretty box was not for me. It had a pincushion cover. It was only suited for a woman. To whom has Agricola given it?

"I suffer a good deal just now. It was a childish idea that I connected with Agricola's wishing me many happy returns of the day. I am ashamed to confess it; but it might have proved to me that he has not forgotten I have another name besides that of Mother Bunch, which they always apply to me. My susceptibility on this head is unfortunately so stubborn that I cannot help feeling a momentary pang of mingled shame and sorrow every time that I am called by that fairy-tale name, and yet I have had no other from infancy. It is for that very reason that I should have been so happy if Agricola had taken this opportunity to call me for once by my own humble name—Magdalen. Happily, he will never know these wishes and regrets!"

Deeper and deeper touched by this page of simple grief, Florine turned over several leaves, and continued:

"I have just been to the funeral of poor little Victorine Herbin, our neighbor. Her father, a journeyman upholsterer, is gone to work by the month, far from

Pairs. She died at nineteen, without a relation near her. Her agony was not long. The good woman who attended her to the last told us that she only pronounced these words: 'At last, oh, at last!' and that with an air of satisfaction, added the nurse. Dear child! she had become so pitiful. At fifteen, she was a rosebud—so pretty, so fresh-looking, with her light hair as soft as silk; but she wasted away by degrees—her trade of renovating mattresses killed her. She was slowly poisoned by the emanations from the wool.* They were all the worse, that she worked almost entirely for the poor, who have cheap stuff to lie upon.

"She had the courage of a lion and an angel's resignation. She always said to

* In the "Ruche Populaire," a workingman's organ, are the following particulars:

"Carding Mattresses.—The dust which flies out of the wool makes carding destructive to health in any case, but trade adulterations enhance the danger. In sticking sheep the skin gets blood-spotted; it has to be bleached to make it salable. Lime is the main whitener, and some of it clings to the wool after the process. The dresser (female, most often) breathes in the fine dust, and, by lung and other complaints, is far from seldom deplorably situated; the majority sicken of it and give up the trade, while those who keep to it, at the

me, in her low, faint voice, broken by a dry and frequent cough: 'I have not long to live, breathing, as I do, lime and vitriol all day long. I spit blood, and have spasms that make me faint.'

"'Why not change your trade?' have I said to her.

"'Where will I find the time to make another apprenticeship?' she would answer; 'and it is now too late. I feel that I am *done for*. It is not *my fault*,' added the good creature, 'for I did not choose my employment. My father would have it so; luckily he can do without me. And then, you see, when one is dead, one cares for nothing, and has no fear of "slop wages."'

"Victorine uttered that sad, common phrase very sincerely, and with a sort of satisfaction. Therefore she died, repeating: 'At last!'

very least, suffer with a catarrh or asthma that torments them until death.

"As for horsehair, the very best is not pure. You can judge what the inferior quality is, from the work-girls calling it *vitriol hair*, because it is the refuse of clippings from goats' and swine, washed in vitriol, boiled in dyes, etc., to burn and disguise such foreign bodies as straw, thorns, splinters, and even bits of skin, not worth picking out. The dust rising when a mass of this is beaten makes as many ravages as the lime-wool."

"It is painful to think that the labor by which the poor man earns his daily bread often becomes a long suicide! I said this the other day to Agricola; he answered me that there were many other fatal employments; those who prepare aquafortis, whitelead, or minium, for instance, are sure to take incurable maladies of which they die.

" 'Do you know,' added Agricola, 'what they say when they start for those fatal works? Why, "We are going to the slaughter-house." '

"That made me tremble with its terrible truth.

" 'And all this takes place in our day,' said I to him, with an aching heart; 'and it is well known. And, out of so many of the rich and powerful, no one thinks of the mortality which decimates his brothers, thus forced to eat homicidal bread!'

" 'What can you expect, my poor sister?' answered Agricola. 'When men are to be incorporated, that they may get killed in war, all pains are taken with them. But when they are to be organized, so as to live in peace, no one cares about it, except M. Hardy, my master. People say, "Pooh! hunger, misery, and suffering of the laboring classes—what is that to us?

that is not politics." They are *wrong*,' added Agricola; 'IT IS MORE THAN POLITICS.'

"As Victorine had not left anything to pay for the church service, there was only the presentation of the body under the porch; for there is not even a plain mass for the poor. Besides, as they could not give eighteen francs to the curate, no priest accompanied the pauper's coffin to the common grave. If funerals, thus abridged and cut short, are sufficient in a religious point of view, why invent other and longer forms? Is it from cupidity? If, on the other hand, they are not sufficient, why make the poor man the only victim of this insufficiency? But why trouble ourselves about the pomp, the incense, the chants, of which they are either too sparing or too liberal? Of what use? and for what purpose? They are vain, terrestrial things, for which the soul recks nothing, when, radiant, it ascends toward its Creator. Yesterday, Agricola made me read an article in a newspaper, in which violent blame and bitter irony are by turns employed, to attack what they call the baneful tendencies of some of the lower orders to improve themselves, to write, to read the poets, and sometimes to make verses.

Material enjoyments are forbidden us by poverty. Is it humane to reproach us for seeking the enjoyments of the mind? What harm can it do any one if every evening, after a day's toil, remote from all pleasure, I amuse myself, unknown to all, in making a few verses, or in writing in this journal the good or bad impressions I have received? Is Agricola the worse workman, because, on returning home to his mother, he employs Sunday in composing some of those popular songs, which glorify the fruitful labors of the artisan, and say to all, *Hope and brotherhood*? Does he not make a more worthy use of his time than if he spent it in a tavern? Ah! those who blame us for these innocent and noble diversions, which relieve our painful toils and sufferings, deceive themselves when they think that, in proportion as the intellect is raised and refined, it is more difficult to bear with privations and misery, and that so the irritation increases against the luckier few.

"Admitting even this to be the case—and it is not so—is it not better to have an intelligent, enlightened enemy, to whose heart and reason you may address yourself, than a stupid, ferocious, implacable foe? But no; enmities disappear as the

mind becomes enlightened and the horizon of compassion extends itself. We thus learn to understand moral afflictions. We discover that the rich also have to suffer intense pains, and that brotherhood in misfortune is already a link of sympathy. Alas! they also have to mourn bitterly for idolized children, beloved mistresses, revered mothers; with them, also, especially among the women, there are, in the height of luxury and grandeur, many broken hearts, many suffering souls, many tears shed in secret. Let them not be alarmed. By becoming their equals in intelligence, the people will learn to pity the rich, if good and unhappy—and to pity them still more if rejoicing in wickedness.

"What happiness! what a joyful day! I am giddy with delight. Oh, truly, man is good, humane, charitable. Oh, yes! the Creator has implanted within him every generous instinct—and, unless he be a monstrous exception, he never does evil willingly. Here is what I saw just now. I will not wait for the evening to write it down, for my heart would, as it were, have time to cool. I had gone to carry home some work that was wanted in a hurry. I was passing the Place du Temple. A few steps from me I saw a child,

about twelve years old at most, with bare head and feet, in spite of the severe weather, dressed in a shabby, ragged smock-frock and trousers, leading by the bridle a large cart-horse, with his harness still on. From time to time the horse stopped short and refused to advance. The child, who had no whip, tugged in vain at the bridle. The horse remained motionless. Then the poor little fellow cried out, 'Oh, dear! Oh, dear!' and began to weep bitterly, looking round him as if to implore the assistance of the passers-by. His dear little face was impressed with so heart-piercing a sorrow that, without reflecting, I made an attempt at which I can now only smile, I must have presented so grotesque a figure. I am horribly afraid of horses, and I am still more afraid of exposing myself to public gaze. Nevertheless, I took courage, and, having an umbrella in my hand, I approached the horse, and with the impetuosity of an ant that strives to move a large stone with a little piece of straw, I struck with all my strength on the croup of the rebellious animal. 'Oh, thanks, my good lady!' exclaimed the child, drying his eyes; 'hit him again, if you please. Perhaps he will get up.'

"I began again, heroically; but, alas! either from obstinacy or laziness, the horse bent his knees and stretched himself out upon the ground; then, getting entangled with his harness, he tore it, and broke his great wooden collar. I had drawn back quickly, for fear of receiving a kick. Upon this new disaster, the child could only throw himself on his knees in the middle of the street, clasping his hands and sobbing, and exclaiming in a voice of despair: 'Help! help!'

"The call was heard; several of the passers-by gathered round, and a more efficacious correction than mine was administered to the restive horse, who rose in a vile state and without harness.

" 'My master will beat me,' cried the poor child, as his tears redoubled; 'I am already two hours after time, for the horse would not go, and now he has broken his harness. My master will beat me, and turn me away. Oh, dear! what will become of me! I have no father nor mother.'

"At these words, uttered with a heart-rending accent, a worthy old clothes-dealer of the Temple, who was among the spectators, exclaimed, with a kindly air, 'No father nor mother! Do not grieve so, my

poor little fellow, the Temple can supply everything. We will mend the harness, and, if my gossips are like me, you shall not go away bareheaded or barefooted in such weather as this.'

"This proposition was greeted with acclamation; they led away both horse and child; some were occupied in mending the harness, then one supplied a cap, another a pair of stockings, another some shoes, and another a good jacket; in a quarter of an hour the child was warmly clad, the harness repaired, and a tall lad of eighteen, brandishing a whip, which he cracked close to the horse's ears, by way of warning, said to the little boy, who, gazing first at his new clothes, and then at the good woman, believed himself the hero of a fairy-tale, 'Where does your governor live, little 'un?'

" 'On the Quai du Canal Saint-Martin, sir,' answered he, in a voice trembling with joy.

" 'Very good,' said the young man, 'I will help you take home the horse, who will go well enough with me, and I will tell the master that the delay was no fault of yours. A balky horse ought not to be trusted to a child of your age.'

"At the moment of setting out, the poor

little fellow said timidly to the good dame, as he took off his cap to her, 'Will you let me kiss you, ma'am?'

"His eyes were full of tears of gratitude. There was heart in that child. This scene of popular charity gave me delightful emotions. As long as I could, I followed with my eyes the tall young man and the child, who now could hardly keep up with the pace of the horse, rendered suddenly docile by fear of the whip.

"Yes! I repeat it with pride! man is naturally good and helpful. Nothing could have been more spontaneous than this movement of pity and tenderness in the crowd, when the poor little fellow exclaimed, 'What will become of me? I have no father nor mother!'

" 'Unfortunate child!' said I to myself. 'No father nor mother. In the hands of a brutal master, who hardly covers him with a few rags, and ill-treats him into the bargain. Sleeping, no doubt, in the corner of a stable. Poor little fellow! and yet so mild and good, in spite of misery and misfortune. I saw it—he was even more grateful than pleased at the service done him. But perhaps this good natural disposition, abandoned without support or

counsel, or help, and exasperated by bad treatment, may become changed and imbittered—and then will come the age of the passions—the bad temptations—'

"Oh! in the deserted poor, virtue is doubly saintly and respectable!

"This morning, after having (as usual) gently reproached me for not going to mass, Agricola's mother said to me these words so touching in her simple and believing mouth, 'Luckily, I pray for you and myself, too, my poor girl; the good God will hear me, and you will *only* go, I hope, to Purgatory.'

"Good mother, angelic soul! she spoke those words in so grave and mild a tone, with so strong a faith in the happy result of her pious intercession, that I felt my eyes become moist, and I threw myself on her neck, as sincerely grateful as if I had believed in Purgatory. This day has been a lucky one for me. I hope I have found work, which luck I shall owe to a young person full of heart and goodness. She is to take me to-morrow to St. Mary's Convent, where she thinks she can find me employment."

Florine, already much moved by the reading, started at this passage in which Mother Bunch alluded to her, ere she continued as follows:

"Never shall I forget with what touching interest, what delicate benevolence, this handsome young girl received me, so poor and so unfortunate. It does not astonish me; for she is attached to the person of Mdlle. de Cardoville. She must be worthy to reside with Agricola's benefactress. It will always be dear and pleasant to me to remember her name. It is grateful and pretty as her face; it is Florine. I am nothing, I have nothing—but if the fervent prayers of a grateful heart might be heard, Mdlle. Florine would be happy, very happy. Alas! I am reduced to say prayers for her—only prayers—for I can do nothing but remember and love her!"

These lines, expressing so simply the sincere gratitude of the hunchback, gave the last blow to Florine's hesitations. She could no longer resist the generous temptation she felt. As she read these last fragments of the journal, her affection and respect for Mother Bunch made new progress. More than ever she felt how infamous it was in her to expose to sarcasms and contempt the most secret thoughts of this unfortunate creature. Happily good is often as contagious as evil. Electrified by all that was warm, noble, and magnanimous in the pages she had just read, Florine

bathed her failing virtue in that pure and vivifying source, and, yielding at last to one of those good impulses which sometimes carried her away, she left the room with the manuscript in her hand, determined, if Mother Bunch had not yet returned, to replace it—resolved to tell Rodin that, this second time, her search for the journal had been vain, the seamstress having no doubt discovered the first attempt.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE DISCOVERY.

A LITTLE while before Florine made up her mind to atone for her shameful breach of confidence, Mother Bunch had returned from the factory, after accomplishing to the end her painful task. After a long interview with Angela, struck, like Agricola, with the ingenuous grace, sense and goodness with which the young girl was endowed, Mother Bunch had the courageous frankness to advise the smith to enter into this marriage. The following scene took place while Florine, still occupied in reading the journal, had not yet taken the

praiseworthy resolution of replacing it. It was ten o'clock at night. The work-girl, returned to Cardoville House, had just entered her chamber. Worn out by so many emotions, she had thrown herself into a chair. The deepest silence reigned in the house. It was now and then interrupted by the soughing of a high wind, which raged without and shook the trees in the garden. A single candle lighted the room, which was papered with dark green. That peculiar tint, and the hunchback's black dress, increased her apparent paleness. Seated in an armchair by the side of the fire, with her head resting upon her bosom, her hands crossed upon her knees, the work-girl's countenance was melancholy and resigned; on it was visible the austere satisfaction which is felt by the consciousness of a duty well performed.

Like all those who, brought up in the merciless school of misfortune, no longer exaggerate the sentiment of sorrow, too familiar and assiduous a guest to be treated as a stranger, Mother Bunch was incapable of long yielding to idle regrets and vain despair, with regard to what was already past. Beyond doubt, the blow had been sudden, dreadful; doubtless it must leave a long and painful remem-

brance in the sufferer's soul; but it was soon to pass, as it were, into that chronic state of pain-durance, which had become almost an integral part of her life. And then this noble creature, so indulgent to fate, found still some consolations in the intensity of her bitter pain. She had been deeply touched by the marks of affection shown her by Angela, Agricola's intended; and she had felt a species of pride of the heart, in perceiving with what blind confidence, with what ineffable joy, the smith accepted the favorable presentiments which seemed to consecrate his happiness. Mother Bunch also said to herself: "At least, henceforth I shall not be agitated by hopes, or rather by suppositions as ridiculous as they were senseless. Agricola's marriage puts a term to all the miserable reveries of my poor head."

Finally, she found a real and deep consolation in the certainty that she had been able to go through this terrible trial, and conceal from Agricola the love she felt for him. We know how formidable to this unfortunate being were those ideas of ridicule and shame which she believed would attach to the discovery of her mad passion. After having remained for some time absorbed in thought, Mother Bunch rose and advanced slowly toward the desk.

"My only recompense," said she, as she prepared the materials for writing, "will be to intrust the mute witness of my pains with this new grief. I shall at least have kept the promise that I made to myself. Believing from the bottom of my soul that this girl is able to make Agricola happy, I told him so with the utmost sincerity. One day, a long time hence, when I shall read over these pages, I shall perhaps find in that a compensation for all that I now suffer."

So saying, she drew the box from the pigeon-hole. Not finding her manuscript, she uttered a cry of surprise; but what was her alarm when she perceived a letter to her address in the place of the journal! She became deadly pale; her knees trembled; she almost fainted away. But her inceasing terror gave her a fictitious energy, and she had the strength to break the seal. A bank-note for five hundred francs fell from the letter on the table, and Mother Bunch read as follows:

"MADEMOISELLE—There is something so original and amusing in reading in your memoirs the story of your love for Agricola that it is impossible to resist the pleasure of acquainting him with the extent of it,

of which he is doubtless ignorant, but to which he cannot fail to show himself sensible. Advantage will be taken to forward it to a multitude of other persons who might, perhaps, otherwise be unfortunately deprived of the amusing contents of your diary. Should copies and extracts not be sufficient, we will have it printed, as one cannot too much diffuse such things. Some will weep—others will laugh—what appears superb to one set of people will seem ridiculous to another; such is life—but your journal will surely make a great sensation. As you are capable of wishing to avoid your triumph, and as you were only covered with rags when you were received out of charity into this house, where you wish to *figure* as the great lady, which does not suit your *shape* for more reasons than one, we inclose in the present five hundred francs to pay for your day-book, and prevent your being without resources, in case you should be modest enough to shrink from the congratulations which await you, certain to overwhelm you by to-morrow, for, at this hour, your journal is already in circulation.

"One of your brethren,

"A Real Mother Bunch."

The vulgar, mocking, and insolent tone of this letter, which was purposely written in the character of a jealous lackey, dissatisfied with the admission of the unfortunate creature into the house, had been calculated with infernal skill, and was sure to produce the effect intended.

"Oh, good Heaven!" were the only words the unfortunate girl could pronounce, in her stupor and alarm.

Now, if we remember in what passionate terms she had expressed her love for her adopted brother, if we recall many passages of this manuscript, in which she revealed the painful wounds often inflicted on her by Agricola without knowing it, and if we consider how great was her terror of ridicule, we shall understand her mad despair on reading this infamous letter. Mother Bunch did not think for a moment of all the noble words and touching narratives contained in her journal. The one horrible idea which weighed down the troubled spirit of the unfortunate creature was, that on the morrow Agricola, Mdlle. de Cardoville, and an insolent and mocking crowd, would be informed of this ridiculous love, which would, she imagined, crush her with shame and confusion. This new blow was so stunning that the

recipient staggered a moment beneath the unexpected shock. For some minutes she remained completely inert and helpless; then, upon reflection, she suddenly felt conscious of a terrible necessity.

This hospitable mansion, where she had found a sure refuge after so many misfortunes, must be left forever. The trembling timidity and sensitive delicacy of the poor creature did not permit her to remain a minute more in this dwelling, where the most secret recesses of her soul had been laid open, profaned, and exposed no doubt to sarcasm and contempt. She did not think of demanding justice and revenge from Mdlle. de Cardoville. To cause a ferment of trouble and irritation in this house, at the moment of quitting it, would have appeared to her ingratitude toward her benefactress. She did not seek to discover the author of the motive of this odious robbery and insulting letter. Why should she, resolved, as she was, to fly from the humiliations with which she was threatened? She had a vague notion (as indeed was intended) that this infamy might be the work of some of the servants, jealous of the affectionate deference shown her by Mdlle. de Cardoville—and this thought filled her with despair. Those

pages—so painfully confidential, which she would not have venturee to impart to the most tender and indulgent mother, because, written as it were with her heart's blood, they painted with too cruel a fidelity the thousand secret wounds of her soul—those pages were to serve, perhaps served even now, for the jest and laughing-stock of the lackeys of the mansion.

. . . . . .

The money which accompanied this letter, and the insulting way in which it was offered, rather tended to confirm her suspicions. It was intended that the fear of misery should not be the obstacle to her leaving the house. The work-girl's resolution was soon taken, with that calm and firm resignation which was familiar to her. She rose, with somewhat bright and haggard eyes, but without a tear in them. Since the day before, she had wept too much. With a trembling, icy hand, she wrote these words on a paper, which she left by the side of the bank-note: "May Mdlle. de Cardoville be blessed for all that she has done for me, and forgive me for having left her house, where I can remain no longer."

Having written this, Mother Bunch threw into the fire the infamous letter,

which seemed to burn her hands. Then, taking a last look at her chamber, furnished so comfortably, she shuddered involuntarily as she thought of the misery that awaited her—a misery more frightful than that of which she had already been the victim, for Agricola's mother had departed with Gabriel, and the unfortunate girl could no longer, as formerly, be consoled in her distress by the almost maternal affection of Dagobert's wife. To live alone—quite alone—with the thought that her fatal passion for Agricola was laughed at by everybody, perhaps even by himself—such were the future prospects of the hunchback. This future terrified her—a dark desire crossed her mind—she shuddered, and an expression of bitter joy contracted her features. Resolved to go, she made some steps toward the door, when, in passing before the fireplace, she saw her own image in the glass, pale as death, and clothed in black; then it struck her that she wore a dress which did not belong to her, and she remembered a passage in the letter, which alluded to the rags she had on before she entered that house. "True!" said she, with a heart-breaking smile, as she looked at her black garments; "they would call me a thief."

And, taking her candle, she entered the little dressing room, and put on again the poor, old clothes, which she had preserved as a sort of pious remembrance of her misfortunes. Only at this instant did her tears flow abundantly. She wept—not in sorrow at resuming the garb of misery, but in gratitude; for all the comforts around her, to which she was about to bid an eternal adieu, recalled to her mind at every step the delicacy and goodness of Mdlle. de Cardoville: therefore, yielding to an almost involuntary impulse, after she had put on her poor, old clothes, she fell on her knees in the middle of the room, and, addressing herself in thought to Mdlle. de Cardoville, she exclaimed, in a voice broken by convulsive sobs: "Adieu! oh, forever, adieu—You, that deigned to call me friend—and sister!"

Suddenly, she rose in alarm; she heard steps in the corridor, which led from the garden to one of the of doors her apartment; the other door opened into the parlor. It was Florine, who (alas! too late) was bringing back the manuscripts. Alarmed at this noise of footsteps, and believing herself already the laughing-stock of the house, Mother Bunch rushed from the room, hastened across the parlor,

gained the courtyard, and knocked at the window of the porter's lodge. The house door opened, and immediately closed upon her. And so the work-girl left Cardoville House.

. . . . . .

Adrienne was thus deprived of a devoted, faithful, and vigilant guardian. Rodin was delivered from an active and sagacious antagonist, whom he had always, with good reason, feared. Having, as we have seen, guessed Mother Bunch's love for Agricola, and knowing her to be a poet, the Jesuit supposed, logically enough, that she must have written secretly some verses inspired by this fatal and concealed passion. Hence the order given to Florine, to try and discover some written evidence of this love; hence this letter, so horribly effective in its coarse ribaldry, of which, it must be observed, Florine did not know the contents, having received it after communicating a summary of the contents of the manuscript, which, the first time, she had only glanced through without taking it away. We have said that Florine, yielding too late to a generous repentance, had reached Mother Bunch's apartment just as the latter quitted the house in consternation.

Perceiving a light in the dressing-room, the waiting-maid hastened thither. She saw upon a chair the black dress that Mother Bunch had just taken off, and, a few steps further, the shabby little trunk, open and empty, in which she had hitherto preserved her poor garments. Florine's heart sunk within her; she ran to the secretary; the disorder of the cardboard boxes, the note of five hundred francs left by the side of the two lines written to Mdlle. de Cardoville, all proved that her obedience to Rodin's orders had borne fatal fruit, and that Mother Bunch had quitted the house forever. Finding the uselessness of her tardy resolution, Florine resigned herself with a sigh to the necessity of delivering the manuscripts to Rodin. Then, forced by the fatality of her miserable position to console herself for evil by evil, she considered that the hunchback's departure would at least make her treachery less dangerous.

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Two days after these events, Adrienne received the following note from Rodin, in answer to a letter she had written him, to inform him of the work-girl's inexplicable departure:

THE ABBE DUBOIS.

—The Wandering Jew Vol. 4, p, 96.

"My dear Young Lady—Obliged to set out this morning for the factory of the excellent M. Hardy, whither I am called by an affair of importance, it is impossible for me to pay you my humble respects. You ask me what I think of the disappearance of this poor girl? I really do not know. The future will, I doubt not, explain all to her advantage. Only, remember what I told you at Dr. Baleinier's, with regard to a certain Society and its secret emissaries, with whom it has the art of surrounding those it wishes to keep a watch on. I accuse no one; but let us only recall facts. This poor girl accused me; and I am, as you know, the most faithful of your servants. She possessed nothing; and yet five hundred francs were found in her secretary. You loaded her with favors; and she leaves your house without even explaining the cause of this extraordinary flight. I draw no conclusion, my dear young lady; I am always unwilling to condemn without evidence; but reflect upon all this, and be on your guard, for you have perhaps escaped a great danger. Be more circumspect and suspicious than ever; such at least is the respectful advice of your most obedient, humble servant, Rodin."

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE TRYSTING-PLACE OF THE WOLVES.

It was Sunday morning—the very day on which Mdlle. de Cardoville had received Rodin's letter with regard to Mother Bunch's disappearance. Two men were talking together, seated at a table in one of the public-houses in the little village of Villiers, situated at no great distance from M. Hardy's factory. The village was for the most part inhabited by quarrymen and stone-cutters, employed in working the neighboring quarries. Nothing can be ruder and more laborious, and at the same time less adequately paid, than the work of this class of people. Therefore, as Agricola had told Mother Bunch, they drew painful comparisons between their condition, almost always miserable, and the comfort and comparative ease enjoyed by M. Hardy's workmen, thanks to his generous and intelligent management, and to the principles of association and community which he had put in practice

among them. Misery and ignorance are always the cause of great evils. Misery is easily excited to anger, and ignorance soon yields to perfidious counsels. For a long time the happiness of M. Hardy's workmen had been naturally envied, but not with a jealousy amounting to hatred. As soon, however, as the secret enemies of the manufacturer, uniting with his rival Baron Tripeaud, had an interest in changing this peaceful state of things—it changed accordingly.

With diabolical skill and perseverance they succeeded in kindling the most evil passions. By means of chosen emissaries they applied to those quarrymen and stonecutters of the neighborhood whose bad conduct had aggravated their misery. Notorious for their turbulence, audacity, and energy, these men might exercise a dangerous influence on the majority of their companions, who were peaceful, laborious, and honest, but easily intimidated by violence. These turbulent leaders, previously imbittered by misfortune, were soon impressed with an exaggerated ideal of the happiness of M. Hardy's workmen, and excited to a jealous hatred of them. They went still further; the incendiary sermons of an abbe, member of the Jesuits, who

had come expressly from Paris to preach during Lent against M. Hardy, acted powerfully on the minds of the women, who filled the church while their husbands were haunting the taverns. Profiting by the growing fear which the approach of the cholera then inspired, the preacher struck with terror these weak and credulous imaginations, by pointing to M. Hardy's factory as a center of corruption and damnation, capable of drawing down the vengeance of Heaven, and bringing the fatal scourge upon the country. Thus the men, already inflamed with envy, were still more excited by the incessant urgency of their wives, who, maddened by the abbe's sermons, poured their curses on that band of atheists, who might bring down so many misfortunes upon them and their children. Some bad characters, belonging to the factory of Baron Tripeaud and paid by him (for it was a great interest the honorable manufacturer had in the ruin of M. Hardy), came to augment the general irritation, and to complete it by raising one of those alarming union questions which in our day have unfortunately caused so much bloodshed. Many of M. Hardy's workmen, before they entered his employ, had belonged to a society or union

called the Devourers, while many of the stone-cutters in the neighboring quarries belonged to a society called the Wolves. Now, for a long time an implacable rivalry had existed between the Wolves and Devourers, and brought about many sanguinary struggles, which are the more to be deplored as, in some respects, the idea of these unions is excellent, being founded on the fruitful and mighty principle of association. But, unfortunately, instead of embracing all trades in one fraternal communion, these unions break up the working class into distinct and hostile societies, whose rivalry often leads to bloody collisions.* For the last week, the Wolves,

* Let it be noted, to the workingman's credit, that such outrageous scenes become more and more rare as he is enlightened to the full consciousness of his worth. Such better tendencies are to be attributed to the just influence of an excellent tract on trades' unions, written by M. Agricole Perdignier, and published in 1841. Paris. This author, a joiner, founded, at his own expense, an establishment in the Faubourg St. Antoine, where some forty or fifty of his trade lodged, and were given, after the day's work, a course of geometry, etc., applied to wood-carving. We went to one of the lectures, and found as much clearness in the professor as attention and intelligence in the audience. At ten, after reading

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excited by so many different importunities, burned to discover an occasion or a pretext to come to blows with the Devourers; but the latter, not frequenting the public-houses, and hardly leaving the factory during the week, had hitherto rendered such a meeting impossible, and the Wolves had been forced to wait for the Sunday with ferocious impatience.

Moreover, a great number of the quarrymen and stone-cutters, being peaceable and hard-working people, had refused, though Wolves themselves, to join this hostile manifestation against the Devourrs of M. Hardy's factory; the leaders had been obliged to recruit their forces from the vagabonds and idlers of the barriers, whom the attraction of tumult and disorder had easily enlisted under the flag of the war-like Wolves. Such then was the dull fer-

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selections, all the lodgers retire, forced by their scanty wages to sleep, perhaps, four in a room. M. Perdignier informed us that study and instruction are such powerful ameliorators, that, during six years, he had only one of his lodgers to expel. "In a few days," he remarked, "the bad eggs find out this is no place for them to addle sound ones!" We are happy to here render public homage to a learned and upright man, devoted to his fellow-workmen.

mentation which agitated the little village of Villiers, while the two men of whom we have spoken were at table in the public-house.

These men had asked for a private room, that they might be alone. One of them was still young, and pretty well dressed. But the disorder in his clothes, his loose cravat, his shirt spotted with wine, his disheveled hair, his look of fatigue, his marble complexion, his bloodshot eyes, announced that a night of debauch had preceded this morning; while his abrupt and heavy gesture, his hoarse voice, his look, sometimes brilliant and sometimes stupid, proved that to the last fumes of the intoxication of the night before were joined the first attacks of a new state of drunkenness. The companion of this man said to him, as he touched his glass with his own: "Your health, my boy!"

"Yours!" answered the young man; "though you look to me like the devil."

"I!—the devil?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"How did you come to know me?"

"Do you repent that you ever knew me?"

"Who told you that I was a prisoner at Sainte-Pelagie?"

"Didn't I take you out of prison?"

"Why did you take me out?"

"Because I have a good heart."

"You are very fond of me, perhaps—just as the butcher likes the ox that he drives to the slaughter-house."

"Are you mad?"

"A man does not pay a hundred thousand francs for another without a motive."

"I have a motive."

"What is it? what do you want to do with me?"

"A jolly companion, that will spend his money like a man, and pass every night like the last. Good wine, good cheer, pretty girls, and gay songs. Is that such a bad trade?"

After he had remained a moment without answering, the young man replied with a gloomy air: "Why, on the eve of my leaving prison, did you attach this condition to my freedom, that I should write to my mistress to tell her that I would never see her again! Why did you exact this letter from me?"

"A sigh! what, are you still thinking of her?"

"Always."

"You are wrong. Your mistress is far from Paris by this time. I saw her get

into the stage-coach before I came to take you out of Sainte-Pelagie."

"Yes, I was stifled in that prison. To get out, I would have given my soul to the devil. You thought so, and therefore you came to me; only, instead of my soul, you took Cephyse from me. Poor Bacchanal Queen! And why did you do it? Thousand thunders! Will you tell me?"

"A man as much attached to his mistress as you are is no longer a man. He wants energy, when the occasion requires."

"What occasion?"

"Let us drink!"

"You make me drink too much brandy."

"Bah! look at me!"

"That's what frightens me. It seems something devilish. A bottle of brandy does not even make you wink. You must have a stomach of iron and a head of marble."

"I have long traveled in Russia. There we drink to roast ourselves."

"And here to only warm. So — let's drink—but wine."

"Nonsense! wine is fit for children. Brandy for men like us!"

"Well, then, brandy; but it burns, and sets the head on fire, and then we see all the flames of hell!"

"That's how I like to see you, hang it!"

"But when you told me that I was too much attached to my mistress, and that I should want energy when the occasion required, of what occasion did you speak?"

"Let us drink!"

"Stop a moment, comrade. I am no more of a fool than others. Your half-words have taught me something."

"Well, what?"

"You know that I have been a workman, that I have many companions, and that, being a good fellow, I am much liked among them. You want me for a cats-paw, to catch other chestnuts?"

"What then?"

"You must be some getter-up of riots—some speculator in revolts."

"What next?"

"You are traveling for some anonymous society, that trades in musket-shots."

"Are you a coward?"

"I burned powder in July, I can tell you—make no mistake!"

"You would not mind burning some again?"

"Just as well that sort of fireworks as any other. Only I find revolutions more agreeable than useful; all that I got from the barricades of the three days was burned

breeches and a lost jacket. All the cause won by me, with its 'Forward! March!' says."

"You know many of Hardy's workmen?"

"Oh! that's why you have brought me down here?"

"Yes—you will meet with many of the workmen from the factory."

"Men from Hardy's take part in a row? No, no; they are too well off for that. You have been sold."

"You will see presently."

"I tell you they are well off. What have they to complain of?"

"What of their brethren—those who have not so good a master, and die of hunger and misery, and call on them for assistance? Do you think they will remain deaf to such a summons? Hardy is only an exception. Let the people but give a good pull all together, and the exception will become the rule and all the world will be happy."

"What you say there is true, but it would be a devil of a pull that would make an honest man out of my old master, Baron Tripeaud, who made me what I am—an out-and-out rip."

"Hardy's workmen are coming; you are

their comrade, and have no interest in deceiving them. They will believe you. Join with me in persuading them—"

"To what?"

"To leave this factory, in which they grow effeminate and selfish, and forget their brothers."

"But if they leave the factory, how are they to live?"

"We will provide for that—on the great day."

"And what's to be done till then?"

"What you have done last night—drink, laugh, sing, and, by way of work, exercise themselves privately in the use of arms."

"Who will bring these workmen here?"

"Some one has already spoken to them. They have had printed papers, reproaching them with indifference to their brothers. Come, will you support me?"

"I'll support you—the more readily as I cannot very well support myself! I only cared for Cephyse in the world; I know that I am on a bad road; you are pushing me on further: let the ball roll! Whether we go to the devil one way or the other is not of much consequence. Let's drink!"

"Drink to our next night's fun; the last was only apprenticeship."

"Of what then are you made? I looked

at you, and never saw you either blush or smile, or change countenance. You are like a man of iron."

"I am not a lad of fifteen. It would take something more to make me laugh. I shall laugh to-night."

"I don't know if it's the brandy; but, devil take me, if you don't frighten me when you say you shall laugh to-night!"

So saying, the young man rose, staggering; he began to be once more intoxicated.

There was a knock at the door. "Come in!" The host made his appearance.

"What's the matter?"

"There's a young man below, who calls himself Olivier. He asks for M. Morok."

"That's right. Let him come up." The host went out.

"It is one of our men, but he is alone," said Morok, whose savage countenance expressed disappointment. "It astonishes me, for I expected a good number. Do you know him?"

"Olivier? Yes—a fair chap, I think."

"We shall see him directly. Here he is." A young man, with an open, bold, intelligent countenance, at this moment entered the room.

"What! old Sleepinbuff!" he exclaimed, at sight of Morok's companion.

"Myself. I have not seen you for an age, Olivier."

"Simple enough, my boy. We do not work at the same place."

"But you are alone!" cried Morok; and pointing to Sleepinbuff, he added: "You may speak before him—he is one of us. But why are you alone?"

"I come alone, but in the name of my comrades."

"Oh!" said Morok, with a sigh of satisfaction, "they consent."

"They refuse—just as I do!"

"What, the devil! they refuse? Have they no more courage than women?" cried Morok, grinding his teeth with rage.

"Hark ye," answered Olivier, coolly. "We have received your letters, and seen your agent. We have had proof that he is really connected with great societies, many members of which are known to us."

"Well! why do you hesitate?"

"First of all, nothing proves that these societies are ready to make a movement."

"I tell you they are."

"He—tells you—they are," said Sleepinbuff, stammering; "and I (hic!) affirm it. Forward! March!"

"That's not enough," replied Olivier.

"Besides, we have reflected upon it. For a week the factory was divided. Even yesterday the discussion was too warm to be pleasant. But this morning Father Simon called us to him; we explained ourselves fully before him, and he brought us all to one mind. We mean to wait, and if any disturbance breaks out, we shall see."

"Is that your final word?"

"It is our last word."

"Silence!" cried Sleepinbuff, suddenly, as he listened, balancing himself on his tottering legs. "It is like the noise of a crowd not far off." A dull sound was indeed audible, which became every moment more and more distinct, and at length grew formidable.

"What is that?" asked Olivier, in surprise.

"Now," replied Morok, smiling with a sinister air, "I remember the host told me there was a great ferment in the village against the factory. If you and your other comrades had separated from Hardy's other workmen, as I hoped, these people who are beginning to howl would have been *for* you, instead of against you."

"This was a trap, then, to set one half of M. Hardy's workmen against the other," cried Olivier: "you hoped that we should

make common cause with these people against the factory, and that—"

The young man had not time to finish. A terrible outburst of shouts, howls and hisses shook the tavern. At the same instant the door was abruptly opened, and the host, pale and trembling, hurried into the chamber, exclaiming: "Gentlemen! do any of you work at M. Hardy's factory?"

"I do," said Olivier.

"Then you are lost. Here are the Wolves in a body, saying there are Devourers here from M. Hardy's, and offering them battle—unless the Devourers will give up the factory, and range themselves on their side."

"It was a trap, there can be no doubt of it!" cried Olivier, looking at Morok and Sleepinbuff, with a threatening air; "if my mates had come, we were all to be let in."

"I lay a trap, Olivier?" stammered Jacques Rennepont. "Never!"

"Battle to the Devourers! or let them join the Wolves!" cried the angry crowd with one voice, as they appeared to invade the house.

"Come!" exclaimed the host. Without giving Olivier time to answer, he seized him by the arm, and opening a window.

which led to a roof at no very great height from the ground, he said to him: "Make your escape by this window, let yourself slide down, and gain the fields; it is time."

As the young workman hesitated, the host added, with a look of terror: "Alone, against a couple of hundred, what can you do? A minute more, and you are lost. Do you not hear them? They have entered the yard; they are coming up."

Indeed, at this moment, the groans, hisses and cheers redoubled in violence; the wooden staircase which led to the first story shook beneath the quick steps of many persons, and the shout rose aloud and piercing: "Battle to the Devourers!"

"Fly, Olivier!" cried Sleepinbuff, almost sobered by the danger.

Hardly had he pronounced the words when the door of the large room which communicated with the small one in which they were was burst open with a frightful crash.

"Here they are!" cried the host, clasping his hands in alarm. Then, running to Olivier, he pushed him, as it were, out of the window; for, with one foot on the sill, the workman still hesitated.

The window once closed, the publican returned toward Morok the instant the lat-

ter entered the large room, into which the leaders of the Wolves had just forced an entry, while their companions were vociferating in the yard and on the staircase. Eight or ten of these madmen, urged by others to take part in these scenes of disorder, had rushed first into the room, with countenances inflamed by wine and anger; most of them were armed with long sticks. A blaster, of Herculean strength and stature, with an old red handkerchief about his head, its ragged ends streaming over his shoulders, miserably dressed in a half-worn goat-skin, brandished an iron drilling-rod, and appeared to direct the movements. With bloodshot eyes, threatening and ferocious countenance, he advanced toward the small room, as if to drive back Morok, and exclaimed, in a voice of thunder: "Where are the Devourers? — the Wolves will eat 'em up!"

The host hastened to open the door of the small room, saying: "There is no one here, my friends—no one. Look for yourselves."

"It is true," said the quarryman, surprised, after peeping into the room; "where are they, then? We were told there were a dozen of them here. They should have marched with us against the factory, or

there'd 'a been a battle, and the Wolves would have tried their teeth!"

"If they have not come," said another, "they will come. Let's wait."

"Yes, yes; we will wait for them."

"We will look close at each other."

"If the Wolves want to see the Devourers," said Morok, "why not go and howl round the factory of the miscreant atheists? At the first howl of the Wolves they will come out, and give you battle."

"They will give you—battle," repeated Sleepinbuff, mechanically.

"Unless the Wolves are afraid of the Devourers," added Morok.

"Since you talk of fear, you shall go with us, and see who's afraid!" cried the formidable blaster, in a thundering voice, as he advanced toward Morok.

A number of voices joined in with, "Who says the Wolves are afraid of the Devourers?"

"It would be the first time!"

"Battle! battle! and make an end of it!"

"We are tired of all this. Why should we be so miserable and they so well off?"

"They have said that quarrymen are brutes, only fit to turn wheels in a shaft, like dogs to turn spits!" cried an emissary of Baron Tripeaud's.

"And that the Devourers would make themselves caps with wolf-skin," added another.

"Neither they nor their wives ever go to mass. They are pagans and dogs!" cried an emissary of the preaching abbe.

"The men might keep their Sunday as they pleased; but their wives not to go to mass!—it is abominable."

"And, therefore, the curate has said that their factory, because of its abominations, might bring down the cholera on the country."

"True! he said that in his sermon."

"Our wives heard it."

"Yes, yes; down with the Devourers, who want to bring the cholera on the country!"

"Hooray, for a fight!" cried the crowd in chorus.

"To the factory, my brave Wolves!" cried Morok, with the voice of a Stentor; "on to the factory!"

"Yes! to the factory! to the factory!" repeated the crowd, with furious stamping; for, little by little, all who could force their way into the room, or up the stairs, had there collected together.

These furious cries recalling Jacques for a moment to his senses, he whispered to

Morok: "It is slaughter you would provoke? I wash my hands of it."

"We shall have time to let them know at the factory. We can give these fellows the slip on the road," answered Morok. Then he cried aloud, addressing the host, who was terrified at this disorder: "Brandy! —let us drink to the health of the brave Wolves! I will stand treat." He threw some money to the host, who disappeared, and soon returned with several bottles of brandy and some glasses.

"What! glasses?" cried Morok. "Do jolly companions, like we are, drink out of glasses?" So saying, he forced out one of the corks, raised the neck of the bottle to his lips, and, having drunk a deep draught, passed it to the gigantic quarryman.

"That's the thing!" said the latter. "Here's in honor of the treat! None but a sneak will refuse, for this stuff will sharpen the Wolves' teeth!"

"Here's to your health, mates!" said Morok, distributing the bottles.

"There will be blood at the end of all this," muttered Sleepinbuff, who, in spite of his intoxication, perceived all the danger of these fatal incitements. Indeed, a large portion of the crowd was already quitting the yard of the public-house, and ad-

vancing rapidly toward M. Hardy's factory.

Those of the workmen and inhabitants of the village who had not chosen to take any part in this movement of hostility (they were the majority), did not make their appearance as this threatening troop passed along the principal street; but a good number of women, excited to fanaticism by the sermons of the abbe, encouraged the war-like assemblage with their cries. At the head of the troop advanced the gigantic blaster, brandishing his formidable bar, followed by a motley mass, armed with sticks and stones. Their heads still warmed by their recent libations of brandy, they had now attained a frightful state of frenzy. Their countenances were ferocious, inflamed, terrible. This unchaining of the worst passions seemed to forebode the most deplorable consequences. Holding each other arm-in-arm, and walking four or five together, the Wolves gave vent to their excitement in war-songs, which closed with the following verse:

"Forward! full of assurance!
Let us try our vigorous arms!
They have wearied out our prudence;
Let us show we've no alarms.

Sprung from a monarch glorious,*
To-day we'll not grow pale,
Whether we win the fight, or fail,
Whether we die, or are victorious!
Children of Solomon, mighty king,
All your efforts together bring,
Till in triumph we shall sing!"

. . . . . .

Morok and Jacques had disappeared while the tumultuous troop were leaving the tavern to hasten to the factory.

CHAPTER L.

THE COMMON DWELLING-HOUSE.

WHILE the Wolves, as we have just seen, prepared a savage attack on the Devourers, the factory of M. Hardy had that morning a festal air, perfectly in accordance with the serenity of the sky; for the wind was from the north, and pretty sharp for a fine day in March. The clock had just struck nine in the Common Dwelling-

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*The Wolves (among others) ascribe the institution of their company to King Solomon. See the curious work by M. Agricole Perdignier, from which the war-song is extracted.

house of the workmen, separated from the workshops by a broad path planted with trees. The rising sun bathed in light this imposing mass of buildings, situated a league from Paris, in a gay and salubrious locality, from which were visible the woody and picturesque hills, that on this side overlook the great city. Nothing could be plainer, and yet more cheerful, than the aspect of the Common Dwelling-house of the workmen. Its slanting roof of red tiles projected over white walls, divided here and there by broad rows of bricks, which contrasted agreeably with the green color of the blinds on the first and second stories.

The buildings, open to the south and east, were surrounded by a large garden of about ten acres, partly planted with trees, and partly laid out in fruit and kitchen-garden. Before continuing this description, which perhaps will appear a little like a fairy-tale, let us begin by saying that the wonders, of which we are about to present the sketch, must not be considered Utopian dreams; nothing, on the contrary, could be of a more positive character, and we are able to assert, and even to prove (what in our time is of great weight and interest) that these wonders were the result of an excellent speculation,

and represented an investment as lucrative as it was secure.

To undertake a vast, noble, and most useful enterprise; to bestow on a considerable number of human creatures an ideal prosperity, compared with the frightful, almost homicidal doom, to which they are generally condemned; to instruct them, and elevate them in their own esteem; to make them prefer to the coarse pleasures of the tavern, or rather to the fatal oblivion which they find there, as an escape from the consciousness of their deplorable destiny, the pleasures of the intellect and the enjoyments of art; in a word, to make men moral by making them happy; and finally, thanks to this generous example, so easy of imitation, to take a place among the benefactors of humanity—and yet, at the same time, to do, as it were, without knowing it, an excellent stroke of business—may appear fabulous. And yet this was the secret of the wonders of which we speak.

. . . . . .

Let us enter the interior of the factory. Ignorant of Mother Bunch's cruel disappearance, Agricola gave himself up to the most happy thoughts as he recalled Angela's image, and, having finished dressing

with unusual care, went in search of his betrothed.

Let us say two words on the subject of the lodging which the smith occupied in the Common Dwelling-house, at the incredibly low rate of seventy-five francs per annum, like the other bachelors on the establishment. This lodging, situated on the second story, was comprised of a capital chamber and bedroom, with a southern aspect, and looking on the garden; the pine floor was perfectly white and clean; the iron bedstead was supplied with a good mattress and warm coverings; a gas-burner and a warm-air pipe were also introduced into the rooms, to furnish light and heat as required; the walls were hung with pretty fancy papering, and had curtains to match; a chest of drawers, a walnut table, a few chairs, a small library, comprised Agricola's furniture. Finally, in the large and light closet, were a place for his clothes, a dressing-table, and large zinc basin, with an ample supply of water. If we compare this agreeable, salubrious, comfortable lodging, with the dark, icy, dilapidated garret, for which the worthy fellow paid ninety francs at his mother's, and to get to which he had more than a league and a half to go every evening, we

shall understand the sacrifice he made to his affection for that excellent woman.

Agricola, after casting a last glance of tolerable satisfaction at his looking-glass, while he combed his mustache and imperial, quitted his chamber, to go and join Angela in the women's workroom. The corridor along which he had to pass was broad, well-lighted from above, floored with pine, and extremely clean. Notwithstanding some seeds of discord which had been lately sown by M. Hardy's enemies among his workmen, until now so fraternally united, joyous songs were heard in almost all the apartments which skirted the corridor, and, as Agricola passed before several open doors, he exchanged a cordial good-morrow with many of his comrades. The smith hastily descended the stairs, crossed the courtyard, in which was a grass-plot planted with trees, with a fountain in the center, and gained the other wing of the building. There was the workroom, in which a portion of the wives and daughters of the associated artisans, who happened not to be employed in the factory, occupied themselves in making up the linen. This labor, joined to the enormous saving effected by the purchase of the materials wholesale, reduced to an incredible extent

the price of each article. After passing through this workroom, a vast apartment looking on the garden, well aired in summer,* and well warmed in winter, Agricola knocked at the door of the rooms occupied by Angela's mother.

If we say a few words with regard to this lodging, situated on the first story, with an eastern aspect, and also looking on the garden, it is that we may take it as a specimen of the habitation of a family in this association, supplied at the incredibly small price of one hundred and twenty-five francs per annum.

A small entrance, opening on the corridor, led to a large room, on each side of which was a smaller chamber, destined for the family, when the boys and girls were too big to continue to sleep in the two dormitories, arranged after the fashion of a large school, and reserved for the children of both sexes. Every night the superintendence of these dormitories was intrusted to a father and mother of a family belonging to the association. The lodging of which we speak, being, like all the others, disencumbered of the paraphernalia of a

*See Adolphe Bobierre "On Air and Health," Paris, 1844.

kitchen—for the cooking was done in common, and on a large scale, in another part of the building—was kept extremely clean. A pretty large piece of carpet, a comfortable armchair, some pretty-looking china on a stand of well-polished wood, some prints hung against the walls, a clock of gilt bronze, a bed, a chest of drawers, and a mahogany secretary, announced that the inhabitants of this apartment enjoyed not only the necessaries, but some of the luxuries of life. Angela, who, from this time, might be called Agricola's betrothed, justified in every point the flattering portrait which the smith had drawn of her in his interview with poor Mother Bunch. The charming girl, seventeen years of age at most, dressed with as much simplicity as neatness, was seated by the side of her mother. When Agricola entered, she blushed slightly at seeing him.

"Mademoiselle," said Agricola, "I have come to keep my promise, if your mother has no objection."

"Certainly, M. Agricola," answered the mother of the young girl, cordially. "She would not go over the Common Dwelling-house with her father, her brother, or me, because she wished to have that pleasure with you to-day. It is quite right that

you, who can talk so well, should do the honors of the house to the newcomer. She has been waiting for you an hour, and with such impatience!"

"Pray excuse me, mademoiselle," said Agricola, gayly; "in thinking of the pleasure of seeing you, I forgot the hour. That is my only excuse."

"Oh, mother!" said the young girl, in a tone of mild reproach, and becoming red as a cherry, "why did you say that?"

"Is it true, yes or no? I do not blame you for it; on the contrary. Go with M. Agricola, child, and he will tell you, better than I can, what all the workmen of the factory owe to M. Hardy."

"M. Agricola," said Angela, tying the ribbons of her pretty cap, "what a pity that your good little adopted sister is not with us."

"Mother Bunch?—yes, you are right, mademoiselle; but that is only a pleasure put off, and the visit she paid us yesterday will not be the last."

Having embraced her mother, the girl took Agricola's arm, and they went out together.

"Dear me, M. Agricola!" said Angela; "if you knew how much I was surprised on entering this fine house, after being ac-

customed to see so much misery among the poor workmen in our country, and in which I too have had my share, while here everybody seems happy and contented. It is really like fairy-land; I think I am in a dream, and when I ask my mother the explanation of these wonders she tells me, 'M. Agricola will explain it all to you.'"

"Do you know why I am so happy to undertake that delightful task, mademoiselle?" said Agricola, with an accent at once grave and tender. "Nothing could be more in season."

"Why so, M. Agricola?"

"Because, to show you this house, to make you acquainted with all the resources of our association, is to be able to say to you: 'Here, the workman, sure of the present, sure of the future, is not, like so many of his poor brothers, obliged to renounce the sweetest want of the heart—the desire of choosing a companion for life—in the fear of uniting misery to misery.'" Angela cast down her eyes, and blushed.

"Here the workman may safely yield to the hope of knowing the sweet joys of a family, sure of not having his heart torn hereafter by the sight of the horrible privations of those who are dear to him; here, thanks to order and industry, and the wise

employment of the strength of all, men, women, and children live happy and contented. In a word, to explain all this to you, mademoiselle," added Agricola, smiling with a still more tender air, "is to prove, that here we can do nothing more reasonable than love, nothing wiser than marry."

"M. Agricola," answered Angela, in a slightly agitated voice, and blushing still more as she spoke, "suppose we were to begin our walk."

"Directly, mademoiselle," replied the smith, pleased at the trouble he had excited in that ingenuous soul. "But, come; we are near the dormitory of the little girls. The chirping birds have long left their nests. Let us go there."

"Willingly, M. Agricola."

The young smith and Angela soon entered a spacious dormitory, resembling that of a first-rate boarding-school. The little iron bedsteads were arranged in symmetrical order; at each end were the beds of the two mothers of families, who took the superintendence by turns.

"Dear me! how well it is arranged, M. Agricola; and how neat and clean! Who is it that takes such good care of it?"

"The children themselves; we have no

servants here. There is an extraordinary emulation between these urchins—as to who shall make her bed most neatly, and it amuses them quite as much as making a bed for their dolls. Little girls, you know, delight in playing at keeping house. Well, here they play at it in good earnest, and the house is admirably kept in consequence."

"Oh! I understand. They turn to account their natural taste for all such kinds of amusement."

"That is the whole secret. You will see them everywhere usefully occupied, and delighted at the importance of the employments given them."

"Oh, M. Agricola!" said Angela, timidly, "only compare these fine dormitories, so warm and healthy, with the horrible icy garrets, where children are heaped pell-mell on a wretched straw-mattress, shivering with cold, as is the case with almost all the workmen's families in our country!"

"And in Paris, mademoiselle, it is even worse."

"Oh! how kind, generous, and rich must M. Hardy be to spend so much money in doing good!"

"I am going to astonish you, mademoiselle!" said Agricola, with a smile; "to

astonish you so much that perhaps you will not believe me."

"Why so, M. Agricola?"

"There is not certainly in the world a man with a better and more generous heart than M. Hardy; he does good for its own sake, and without thinking of his personal interest. And yet, Mdlle. Angela, were he the most selfish and avaricious of men, he would still find it greatly to his advantage to put us in a position to be as comfortable as we are."

"Is it possible, M. Agricola? You tell me so, and I believe it; but if good can so easily be done, if there is even an advantage in doing it, why is it not more commonly attempted?"

"Ah! mademoiselle, it requires three gifts very rarely met with in the same person—knowledge, power, and will."

"Alas! yes. Those who have the knowledge have not the power."

"And those who have the power have neither the knowledge nor the will."

"But how does M. Hardy find any advantage in the good he does for you?"

"I will explain that presently, mademoiselle."

"Oh! what a nice, sweet smell of fruit!" said Angela, suddenly.

"Our common fruit store is close at hand. I wager we shall find there some of the little birds from the dormitory—not occupied in picking and stealing, but hard at work."

Opening a door, Agricola led Angela into a large room, furnished with shelves, on which the winter-fruits were arranged in order. A number of children, from seven to eight years old, neatly and warmly clad, and glowing with health, exerted themselves cheerfully, under the superintendence of a woman, in separating and sorting the spoiled fruit.

"You see," said Agricola, "wherever it is possible we make use of the children. These occupations are amusements for them, answering to the need of movement and activity natural to their age; and, in this way, we can employ the grown girls and the women to much better advantage."

"True, M. Agricola; how well it is all arranged."

"And if you saw what services the urchins in the kitchen render! Directed by one or two women, they do the work of eight or ten servants."

"In fact," said Angela, smiling, "at their age we like so much to play at cooking dinner. They must be delighted.'

"And in the same way, under pretext of playing at gardening, they weed the ground, gather the fruit and vegetables, water the flowers, roll the paths, and so on. In a word, this army of infant-workers, who generally remain till ten or twelve years of age without being of any service, are here very useful. Except three hours of school, which is quite sufficient for them, from the age of six or seven their recreations are turned to good account, and the dear little creatures, by the saving of full-grown arms which they effect, actually gain more than they cost; and then, mademoiselle, do you not think there is something in the presence of childhood thus mixed up with every labor—something mild, pure, almost sacred, which has its influence on our words and actions, and imposes a salutary reserve? The coarsest man will respect the presence of children."

"The more one reflects, the more one sees that everything here is really designed for the happiness of all!" said Angela, in admiration.

"It has not been done without trouble. It was necessary to conquer prejudices, and break through customs. But see, Mdlle. Angela, here we are at the kitchen," added the smith, smiling; "is it not as im-

posing as that of a barrack or a public school?"

Indeed, the culinary department of the Common Dwelling-house was immense. All its utensils were bright and clean; and thanks to the marvelous and economical inventions of modern science (which are always beyond the reach of the poorer classes, to whom they are most necessary, because they can only be practiced on a large scale), not only the fire on the hearth, and in the stoves, was fed with half the quantity of fuel that would have been consumed by each family individually, but the excess of the caloric sufficed, with the aid of well-constructed tubes, to spread a mild and equal warmth through all parts of the house. And here also children, under the direction of two women, rendered numerous services. Nothing could be more comic than the serious manner in which they performed their culinary functions; it was the same with the assistance they gave in the bake-house, where, at an extraordinary saving in the price (for they bought flour wholesale), they made an excellent household bread, composed of pure wheat and rye, so preferable to that whiter bread, which too often owes its apparent qualities to some deleterious substance.

"Good-day, Dame Bertrand," said Agricola, gayly, to a worthy matron, who was gravely contemplating the slow evolution of several spits, worthy of Gamache's Wedding, so heavily were they laden with pieces of beef, mutton, and veal, which began to assume a fine golden brown color of the most attractive kind; "good day, Dame Bertrand. According to the rule, I do not pass the threshold of the kitchen. I only wish it to be admired by this young lady, who is a new-comer among us."

"Admire, my lad, pray admire—and above all take notice how good these brats are, and how well they work!" So saying, the matron pointed with the long ladle, which served her as a scepter, to some fifteen children of both sexes, seated round a table and deeply absorbed in the exercise of their functions, which consisted in peeling potatoes and picking herbs.

"We are, I see, to have a downright Belshazzar's feast, Dame Bertrand?" said Agricola, laughing.

"Faith! a feast like we have always, my lad. Here is our bill of fare for to-day. A good vegetable soup, roast beef with potatoes, salad, fruit, cheese; and for extras, it being Sunday, some currant tarts

made by Mother Denis at the bake-house, where the oven is heating now."

"What you tell me, Dame Bertrand, gives me a furious appetite," said Agricola, gayly. "One soon knows when it is *your* turn in the kitchen," added he, with a flattering air.

"Get along, do!" said the female Soyer on service, merrily.

"What astonishes me so much, M. Agricola," said Angela, as they continued their walk, "is the comparison of the insufficient, unwholesome food of the workmen in our country with that which is provided here."

"And yet we do not spend more than twenty-five sous a day, for much better food than we should get for three francs in Paris."

"But really it is hard to believe, M. Agricola. How is it possible?"

"It is thanks to the magic wand of M. Hardy. I will explain it all presently."

"Oh! how impatient I am to see M. Hardy!"

"You will soon see him—perhaps to-day; for he is expected every moment. But here is the refectory, which you do not yet know, as your family, like many others, prefer dining at home. See what a fine

room looking out on the garden, just opposite the fountain!"

It was indeed a vast hall built in the form of a gallery, with ten windows opening on the garden. Tables, covered with shining oilcloth, were ranged along the walls so that, in winter, this apartment served in the evening, after work, as a place of meeting for those who preferred to pass an hour together instead of remaining alone or with their families. Then, in this large hall, well warmed and brilliantly lighted with gas, some read, some played cards, some talked, and some occupied themselves with easy work.

"That is not all," said Agricola to the young girl; "I am sure you will like this apartment still better when I tell you that on Thursdays and Sundays we make a ball-room of it and on Tuesdays and Saturdays a concert-room."

"Really!"

"Yes," continued the smith proudly, "we have among us musicians quite capable of tempting us to dance. Moreover, twice a week, nearly all of us sing in chorus —men, women and children. Unfortunately, this week, some disputes that have arisen in the factory have prevented our concerts."

"So many voices! that must be superb."

"It is very, fine I assure you. M. Hardy has always encouraged this amusement among us, which has, he says—and he is right—so powerful an effect on the mind and the manners. One winter, he sent for two pupils of the celebrated Wilhelm, and, since then, our school has made great progress. I assure you, Mdlle. Angela, that, without flattering ourselves, there is something truly exciting in the sound of two hundred voices, singing in chorus some hymn to Labor or Freedom. You shall hear it, and you will, I think, acknowledge that there is something great and elevating in the heart of man, in this fraternal harmony of voices, blending in one grave, sonorous, imposing sound."

"Oh! I believe it. But what happiness to inhabit here. It is a life of joy; for labor, mixed with recreation, becomes itself a pleasure."

"Alas! here, as everywhere, there are tears and sorrows," replied Agricola, sadly. "Do you see that isolated building in a very exposed situation?"

"Yes; what is it?"

"That is our hospital for the sick. Happily, thanks to our healthy mode of life, it is not often full; an annual subscription

enables us to have a good doctor. Moreover, a mutual benefit society is arranged in such a manner among us, that any one of us, in case of illness, receives two-thirds of what he would have gained in health."

"How well it is all managed! And there, M. Agricola, on the other side of the grass-plot?"

"That is the wash-house, with water laid on, cold and hot; and under yonder shed is the drying-place; further on, you see the stables and the lofts and granaries for the provender of the factory horses."

"But, M. Agricola, will you tell me the secret of all these wonders?"

"In ten minutes you shall understand it all, mademoiselle."

Unfortunately, Angela's curiosity was for a while disappointed. The girl was now standing with Agricola close to the iron gate, which shut in the garden from the broad avenue that separated the factory from the Common Dwelling-house. Suddenly, the wind brought from the distance the sound of trumpets and military music; then was heard the gallop of two horses, approaching rapidly, and soon after a general officer made his appearance, mounted on a fine black charger, with a long flowing tail and crimson housings; he

wore cavalry boots and white breeches, after the fashion of the empire; his uniform glittered with gold embroidery, the red ribbon of the Legion of Honor was passed over his right epaulet, with its four silver stars, and his hat had a broad gold border, and was crowned with a white plume, the distinctive sign reserved for the marshals of France. No warrior could have had a more martial and chivalrous air, or have sat more proudly on his war-horse. At the moment Marshal Simon (for it was he) arrived opposite the place where Angela and Agricola were standing, he drew up his horse suddenly, sprang lightly to the ground, and threw the golden reins to a servant in livery, who followed also on horseback.

"Where shall I wait for your grace?" asked the groom.

"At the end of the avenue," said the marshal.

And, uncovering his head respectfully, he advanced hastily with his hat in his hand, to meet a person whom Angela and Agricola had not previously perceived. This person soon appeared at a turn of the avenue; he was an old man, with an energetic, intelligent countenance. He wore a very neat blouse, and a cloth cap

over his long, white hair. With his hands in his pockets, he was quietly smoking an old meerschaum pipe.

"Good-morning, father," said the marshal, respectfully, as he affectionately embraced the old workman, who, having tenderly returned the pressure, said to him: "Put on your hat, my boy. But how gay we are!" added he, with a smile.

"I have just been to a review, father, close by; and I took the opportunity to call on you as soon as possible."

"But shall I then not see my granddaughters to-day, as I do every Sunday?"

"They are coming in a carriage, father, and Dagobert accompanies them."

"But what is the matter? you appear full of thought."

"Indeed, father," said the marshal, with a somewhat agitated air, "I have serious things to talk about."

"Come in, then," said the old man, with some anxiety. The marshal and his father disappeared at the turn of the avenue.

Angela had been struck with amazement at seeing this brilliant general, who was entitled "your grace," salute an old workman in a blouse as his father; and, looking at Agricola with a confused air, she

said to him: "What, M. Agricola! this old workman—"

"Is the father of Marshal Duke de Ligny —the friend—yes, I may say the friend," added Agricola, with emotion, "of my father, who for twenty years served under him in war."

"To be placed so high, and yet to be so respectful and tender to his father!" said Angela. "The marshal must have a very noble heart; but why does he let his father remain a workman?"

"Because Father Simon will not quit his trade and the factory for anything in the world. He was born a workman, and he will die a workman, though he is the father of a duke and marshal of France."

CHAPTER LI.

THE SECRET.

When the very natural astonishment which the arrival of Marshal Simon had caused in Angela had passed away, Agricola said to her with a smile: "I do not wish to take advantage of this circumstance, Mdlle. Angela, to spare you the

account of the secret, by which all the wonders of our Common Dwelling-house are brought to pass."

"Oh! I should not have let you forget your promise, M. Agricola," answered Angela, "what you have already told me interests me too much for that."

"Listen, then. M. Hardy, like a true magician, has pronounced three cabalistic words: ASSOCIATION—COMMUNITY—FRATERNITY. We have understood the sense of these words, and the wonders you have seen have sprung from them, to our great advantage; and also, I repeat, to the great advantage of M. Hardy."

"It is that which appears so extraordinary, M. Agricola."

"Suppose, mademoiselle, that M. Hardy, instead of being what he is, had only been a cold-hearted speculator, looking merely to the profit, and saying to himself: 'To make the most of my factory, what is needed? Good work—great economy in the raw material—full employment of the workman's time; in a word, cheapness of manufacture, in order to produce cheaply—excellence of the thing produced, in order to sell dear.'"

"Truly, M. Agricola, no manufacturer could desire more."

"Well, mademoiselle, these conditions might have been fulfilled, as they have been, but how? Had M. Hardy only been a speculator he might have said: 'At a distance from my factory, my workmen might have trouble to get there; rising earlier, they will sleep less; it is a bad economy to take from the sleep so necessary to those who toil. When they get feeble, the work suffers for it; then the inclemency of the seasons makes it worse; the workman arrives wet, trembling with cold, enervated before he begins to work—and then, what work!' "

"It is unfortunately but too true, M. Agricola. At Lille, when I reached the factory, wet through with a cold rain, I used sometimes to shiver all day long at my work."

"Therefore, Mdlle. Angela, the speculator might say: 'To lodge my workmen close to the door of my factory would obviate this inconvenience. Let us make the calculation. In Paris, the married workman pays about two hundred and fifty francs a year,* for one or two wretched

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*The average price of a workman's lodging, composed of two small rooms and a closet at most, on the third or fourth story.

rooms and a closet, dark, small, unhealthy, in a narrow, miserable street; there he lives pell-mell with his family. What ruined constitutions are the consequence! and what sort of work can you expect from a feverish and diseased creature? As for the single men, they pay for a smaller, and quite as unwholesome lodging, about one hundred and fifty francs a year. Now, let us make the addition. I employ one hundred and forty-six married workmen, who pay together, for their wretched holes, thirty-six thousand five hundred francs; I employ also one hundred and fifteen bachelors, who pay at the rate of seventeen thousand two hundred and eighty francs, the total will amount to about fifty thousand francs per annum, the interest on a million.' "

"Dear me, M. Agricola! what a sum to be produced by uniting all these little rents together!"

"You see, mademoiselle, that fifty thousand francs a year is a millionaire's rent. Now, what says our speculator: 'To induce our workmen to leave Paris, I will offer them enormous advantages. I will reduce their rent one-half, and, instead of small, unwholesome rooms, they shall have large, airy apartments, well-warmed and

lighted, at a trifling charge. Thus, one hundred and forty-six families, paying me only one hundred and twenty-five francs a year, and one hundred and fifteen bachelors, seventy-five francs, I shall have a total of twenty-six to twenty-seven thousand francs. Now, a building large enough to hold all these people would cost me at most five hundred thousand francs.* I shall then have invested my money at five per cent, at the least, and with perfect security, since the wages is a guarantee for the payment of the rent.' "

"Ah, M. Agricola! I begin to understand how it may sometimes be advantageous to do good, even in a pecuniary sense."

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*This calculation is amply sufficient, if not excessive. A similar building, at one league from Paris, on the side of Montrouge, with all the necessary offices, kitchen, wash-houses, etc., with gas and water laid on, apparatus for warming, etc., and a garden of ten acres, cost, at the period of this narrative, hardly five hundred thousand francs. An experienced builder has obliged us with an estimate, which confirms what we advance. It is, therefore, evident that, even at the same price which workmen are in the habit of paying, it would be possible to provide them with perfectly healthy lodgings, and yet invest one's money at ten per cent.

"And I am almost certain, mademoiselle, that, in the long run, affairs conducted with uprightness and honesty turn out well. But to return to our speculator: 'Here,' will he say, 'are my workmen, living close to my factory, well lodged, well-warmed, and arriving always fresh at their work. That is not all; the English workman who eats good beef, and drinks good beer, does twice as much, in the same time, as the French workman,* reduced to a detestable kind of food, rather weakening than the reverse, thanks to the poisonous adulteration of the articles he consumes. My workmen will then labor much better if they eat much better. How shall I manage it without loss? Now I think of it, what is the food in barracks, schools, even prisons? Is it not the union of individual resources which procures an amount of comfort impossible to realize without such an association? Now, if my two hundred and sixty workmen, instead of cooking two hundred and sixty detestable dinners,

*The fact was proved in the works connected with the Rouen Railway. Those French workmen who, having no families, were able to live like the English, did at least as much work as the latter, being strengthened by wholesome and sufficient nourishment.

were to unite to prepare one good dinner for all of them, which might be done thanks to the savings of all sorts that would ensue, what an advantage for me and them! Two or three women, aided by children, would suffice to make ready the daily repasts; instead of buying wood and charcoal in fractions,* and so paying for it double its value, the association of my workmen would, upon my security (their wages would be a sufficient security for me in return), lay in their own stock of wood, flour, butter, oil, wine, etc., all which they would procure directly from the producers. Thus, they would pay three or four sous for a bottle of pure, wholesome wine, instead of paying twelve or fifteen sous for poison. Every week the association would buy a whole ox, and some sheep, and the women would make bread, as in the country. Finally, with these resources, and order and economy, my workmen may have wholesome, agreeable, and sufficient food, for from twenty to twenty-five sous a day.' "

"Ah! this explains it, M. Agricola."

"It is not all, mademoiselle. Our cool-

*Buying pennyworths, like all other purchases at minute retail, are greatly to the poor man's disadvantage.

headed speculator would continue: 'Here are my workmen well lodged, well warmed, well fed, with a saving of at least half; why should they not also be warmly clad? Their health will then have every chance of being good, and health is labor. The association will buy wholesale, and at the manufacturing price (still upon my security, secured to me by their wages), warm, good, strong materials, which a portion of the workmen's wives will be able to make into clothes as well as any tailor. Finally, the consumption of caps and shoes being considerable, the association will obtain them at a great reduction in price.' Well, Mdlle. Angela! what do you say to our speculator?"

"I say, M. Agricola," answered the young girl, with ingenuous admiration, "that it is almost incredible, and yet so simple."

"No doubt, nothing is more simple than the good and beautiful, and yet we think of it so seldom. Observe that our man has only been speaking with a view to his own interest—only considering the material side of the question—reckoning for nothing the habit of fraternity and mutual aid which inevitably springs from living together in common—not reflecting that a better mode

of life improves and softens the character of man—not thinking of the support and instruction which the strong owe to the weak—not acknowledging, in fine, that the honest, active, and industrious man has a positive right to demand employment from society, and wages proportionate to the wants of his condition. No, our speculator only thinks of the gross profits; and yet, you see, he invests his money in buildings at five per cent, and finds the greatest advantages in the material comfort of his workmen."

"It is true, M. Agrícola."

"And what will you say, mademoiselle, when I prove to you that our speculator finds also a great advantage in giving to his workmen, in addition to their regular wages, a proportionate share of his profits?"

"That appears to me more difficult to prove, M. Agricola."

"Yet I will convince you of it in a few minutes."

Thus conversing, Angela and Agricola had reached the garden-gate of the Common Dwelling-house. An elderly woman, dressed plainly, but with care and neatness, approached Agricola and asked him: "Has M. Hardy returned to the factory, sir?"

"No, madame; but we expect him hourly."

"To-day, perhaps?"

"To-day or to-morrow, madame."

"You cannot tell me at what hour he will be here?"

"I do not think it is known, madame, but the porter of the factory, who also belongs to M. Hardy's private house, may, perhaps, be able to inform you."

"I thank you, sir."

"Quite welcome, madame."

"M. Agricola," said Angela, when the woman who had just questioned him was gone, "did you remark that this lady was very pale and agitated?"

"I noticed it as you did, mademoiselle; I thought I saw tears standing in her eyes."

"Yes, she seemed to have been crying. Poor woman! perhaps she came to ask assistance of M. Hardy. But what ails you, M. Agricola? You appear quite pensive."

Agricola had a vague presentiment that the visit of this elderly woman with so sad a countenance had some connection with the adventure of the young and pretty lady, who, three days before, had come all agitated and in tears to inquire after M.

Hardy, and who had learned—perhaps too late—that she was watched and followed.

"Forgive me, mademoiselle," said Agricola to Angela; "but the presence of this old lady reminded me of a circumstance which, unfortunately, I cannot tell you, for it is a secret that does not belong to me alone."

"Oh! do not trouble yourself, M. Agricola," answered the young girl, with a smile; "I am not inquisitive, and what we were talking of before interests me so much that I do not wish to hear you speak of anything else."

"Well, then, mademoiselle, I will say a few words more, and you will be as well informed as I am of the secrets of our association."

"I am listening, M. Agricola."

"Let us still keep in view the speculator from mere interest. 'Here are my workmen,' says he, 'in the best possible condition to do a great deal of work. Now, what is to be done to obtain large profits? Produce cheaply, and sell dear. But there will be no cheapness, without economy in the use of the raw material, perfection of the manufacturing process, and celerity of labor. Now, in spite of all my vigilance, how am I to prevent my workmen from wasting the materials? How am I to in-

duce them, each in his own province, to seek for the most simple and least irksome processes?' "

"True, M. Agricola; how is that to be done?"

" 'And that is not all,' says our man; 'to sell my produce at high prices it should be irreproachable, excellent. My workmen do pretty well; but that is not enough. I want them to produce masterpieces.' "

"But, M. Agricola, when they have once performed the task set them, what interest have workmen to give themselves a great deal of trouble to produce masterpieces?"

"There it is, Mdlle. Angela; WHAT INTEREST have they? Therefore, our speculator soon says to himself: 'That my workmen may have an *interest* to be economical in the use of the materials, an interest to employ their time well, an interest to invent new and better manufacturing processes, an interest to send out of their hands nothing but masterpieces—I must give them an interest in the profits earned by their economy, activity, zeal, and skill. The better they manufacture, the better I shall sell, and the larger will be their gain, and mine also.' "

"Oh! now I understand, M. Agricola."

"And our speculator would make a good

speculation. Before he was interested, the workman said: 'What does it matter to me, that I do more or better in the course of the day? What shall I gain by it? Nothing. Well, then, little work for little wages.' But now, on the contrary (he says), 'I have an interest in displaying zeal and economy. All is changed. I redouble my activity, and strive to excel the others. If a comrade is lazy, and likely to do harm to the factory, I have the right to say to him: "Mate, we all suffer more or less from your laziness, and from the injury you are doing the common weal."' "

"And then, M. Agricola, with what ardor, courage, and hope you must set to work!"

"That is what our speculator counts on; and he may say to himself, further: 'Treasures of experience and practical wisdom are often buried in workshops, for want of good-will, opportunity, or encouragement. Excellent workmen, instead of making all the improvements in their power, follow with indifference the old jog-trot. What a pity! for an intelligent man, occupied all his life with some special employment, must discover, in the long run, a thousand ways of doing the work better and quicker. I will form, therefore, a sort of consulting

committee; I will summon to it my foremen and my most skillful workmen. Our interest is now the same. Light will necessarily spring from this center of practical intelligence.' Now, the speculator is not deceived in this, and soon struck with the incredible resources, the thousand new, ingenious, perfect inventions suddenly revealed by his workmen, 'Why,' he exclaims, 'if you knew this, did you not tell it before? What for the last ten years has cost me a hundred francs to make would have cost me only fifty, without reckoning an enormous saving of time.'—'Sir,' answers the workman, who is not more stupid than others, 'what interest had I, that you should effect a saving of fifty per cent? None. But now it is different. You give me, besides my wages, a share in your profits, you raise me in my own esteem, by consulting my experience and knowledge. Instead of treating me as an inferior being, you enter into communion with me. It is my interest, it is my duty, to tell you all I know, and to try to acquire more.' And thus it is, Mdlle. Angela, that the speculator can organize his establishment so as to shame his oppositionists, and provoke their envy. Now if, instead of a cold-hearted calculator, we take a man

who unites with the knowledge of these facts the tender and generous sympathies of an evangelical heart, and the elevation of a superior mind, he will extend his ardent solicitude, not only to the material comfort, but to the moral emancipation, of his workmen. Seeking everywhere every possible means to develop their intelligence, to improve their hearts, and strong in the authority acquired by his beneficence, feeling that he on whom depends the happiness or the misery of three hundred human creatures has also the care of souls, he will be the guide of those whom he no longer calls his workmen, but his brothers, in a straightforward and noble path, and will try to create in them the taste for knowledge and art which will render them happy and proud of a condition of life that is often accepted by others with tears and curses of despair. Well, Mdlle. Angela, such a man is—but, see! he could not arrive among us except in the middle of a blessing. There he is—there is M. Hardy."

"Oh, M. Agricola!" said Angela, deeply moved, and drying her tears; "we should receive him with our hands clasped in gratitude."

"Look if that mild and noble countenance is not the image of his admirable soul!"

A carriage with post-horses, in which was M. Hardy, with M. de Blessac, the unworthy friend who was betraying him in so infamous a manner, entered at this moment the courtyard of the factory.

A little while after a humble hackney-coach was seen advancing also toward the factory, from the direction of Paris. In this coach was Rodin.

CHAPTER LII.

REVELATIONS.

DURING the visit of Angela and Agricola to the Common Dwelling-house, the band of Wolves, joined upon the road by many of the haunters of taverns, continued to march toward the factory, which the hackney-coach, that brought Rodin from Paris, was also fast approaching. M. Hardy, on getting out of the carriage with his friend M. de Blessac, had entered the parlor of the house that he occupied next the factory. M. Hardy was of middle size, with an elegant and slight figure, which announced a nature essentially nervous and impressionable. His forehead was broad

and open, his complexion pale, his eyes black, full at once of mildness and penetration, his countenance honest, intelligent, and attractive.

One word will paint the character of M. Hardy. His mother had called him her Sensitive Plant. His was indeed one of those fine and exquisitely delicate organizations, which are trusting, loving, noble, generous, but so susceptible that the least touch makes them shrink into themselves. If we join to this excessive sensibility a passionate love for art, a first-rate intellect, tastes essentially refined, and then think of the thousand deceptions and numberless infamies of which M. Hardy must have been the victim in his career as a manufacturer, we shall wonder how this heart, so delicate and tender, had not been broken a thousand times, in its incessant struggle with merciless self-interest. M. Hardy had indeed suffered much. Forced to follow the career of productive industry, to honor the engagements of his father, a model of uprightness and probity, who had yet left his affairs somewhat embarrassed, in consequence of the events of 1815, he had succeeded, by perseverance and capacity, in attaining one of the most honorable positions in the commercial world. But,

to arrive at this point, what ignoble annoyances had he to bear with, what perfidious opposition to combat, what hateful rivalries to tire out!

Sensitive as he was, M. Hardy would a thousand times have fallen a victim to his emotions of painful indignation against baseness, of bitter disgust at dishonesty, but for the wise and firm support of his mother. When he returned to her, after a day of painful struggles with odious deceptions, he found himself suddenly transported into an atmosphere of such beneficent purity, of such radiant serenity, that he lost almost on the instant the remembrance of the base things by which he had been so cruelly tortured during the day; the pangs of his heart were appeased at the mere contact of her great and lofty soul; and therefore his love for her resembled idolatry. When he lost her, he experienced one of those calm, deep sorrows which have no end—which become, as it were, part of life, and have even sometimes their days of melancholy sweetness. A little while after this great misfortune, M. Hardy became more closely connected with his workmen. He had always been a just and good master; but, although the place that his mother left in his heart would ever remain void,

he felt as it were a redoubled overflowing of the affections, and the more he suffered, the more he craved to see happy faces around him. The wonderful ameliorations which he now produced in the physical and moral condition of all about him, served, not to divert, but to occupy his grief.

Little by little he withdrew from the world, and concentrated his life in three affections: a tender and devoted friendship, which seemed to include all past friendships—a love ardent and sincere, like a last passion—and a paternal attachment to his workmen. His days therefore passed in the heart of that little world, so full of respect and gratitude toward him—a world which he had, as it were, created after the image of his own mind, that he might find there a refuge from the painful realities he dreaded, surrounded with good, intelligent, happy beings, capable of responding to the noble thoughts which had become more and more necessary to his existence. Thus, after many sorrows, M. Hardy, arrived at the maturity of age, possessing a sincere friend, a mistress worthy of his love, and knowing himself certain of the passionate devotion of his workmen, had attained, at the period of

this history, all the happiness he could hope for since his mother's death.

. . . . . .

M. de Blessac, his bosom friend, had long been worthy of his touching and fraternal affection; but we have seen by what diabolical means Father d'Aigrigny and Rodin had succeeded in making M. de Blessac, until then upright and sincere, the instrument of their machinations. The two friends, who had felt on their journey a little of the sharp influence of the north wind, were warming themselves at a good fire lighted in M. Hardy's parlor.

"Oh! my dear Marcel, I begin really to get old," said M. Hardy, with a smile, addressing M. de Blessac; "I feel more and more the want of being at home. To depart from my usual habits has become painful to me, and I execrate whatever obliges me to leave this happy little spot of ground."

"And when I think," answered M. de Blessac, unable to forbear blushing, "when I think, my friend, that you undertook this long journey only for my sake!—"

"Well, my dear Marcel! have you not just accompanied me in your turn, in an excursion which, without you, would have been as tiresome as it has been charming?"

"What a difference, my friend! I have contracted toward you a debt that I can never repay."

"Nonsense, my dear Marcel! Between us there are no distinctions of meum and tuum. Besides, in matters of friendship, it is as sweet to give as to receive."

"Noble heart! noble heart!"

"Say, happy heart!—most happy, in the last affections for which it beats."

"And who, gracious Heaven! could deserve happiness on earth, if it be not you, my friend?"

"And to what do I owe that happiness? To the affections which I found here, ready to sustain me, when, deprived of the support of my mother, who was all my strength, I felt myself (I confess my weakness) almost incapable of standing up against adversity."

"You, my friend—with so firm and resolute a character in doing good—you, that I have seen struggle with so much energy and courage, to secure the triumph of some great and noble idea?"

"Yes; but the further I advance in my career, the more am I disgusted with all base and shameful actions, and the less strength I feel to encounter them."

"Were it necessary, you would have the courage, my friend."

"My dear Marcel," replied M. Hardy, with mild and restrained emotion, "I have often said to you: My courage was my mother. You see, my friend, when I went to her, with my heart torn by some horrible ingratitude, or disgusted by some base deceit, she, taking my hands between her own venerable palms, would say to me in her grave and tender voice: 'My dear child, it is for the ungrateful and dishonest to suffer; let us pity the wicked, let us forget evil, and only think of good.'—Then, my friend, this heart, painfully contracted, expanded beneath the sacred influence of the maternal words, and every day I gathered strength from her, to recommence on the morrow a cruel struggle with the sad necessities of my condition. Happily, it has pleased God, that, after losing that beloved mother, I have been able to bind up my life with affections, deprived of which, I confess, I should find myself feeble and disarmed—for you cannot tell, Marcel, the support, the strength that I have found in your friendship."

"Do not speak of me, my dear friend," replied M. de Blessac, dissembling his embarrassment. "Let us talk of another

affection, almost as sweet and tender as that of a mother."

"I understand you, my good Marcel," replied M. Hardy; "I have concealed nothing from you, since, under such serious circumstances, I had recourse to the counsels of your friendship. Well! yes; I think that every day I live augments my adoration for this woman, the only one that I have ever passionately loved, the only one that I shall now ever love. And then I must tell you, that my mother, not knowing what Margaret was to me, was often loud in her praise, and that circumstance renders this love almost sacred in my eyes."

"And then there are such strange resemblances between Mme. de Noisy's character and yours, my friend; above all, in her worship of her mother."

"It is true, Marcel; that affection has often caused me both admiration and torment. How often she has said to me, with her habitual frankness: 'I have sacrificed all for you, but I would sacrifice you for my mother.'"

"Thank Heaven, my friend, you will never see Mme. de Noisy exposed to that cruel choice. Her mother, you say, has long renounced her intention of returning to America, where M. de Noisy, perfectly

careless of his wife, appears to have settled himself permanently. Thanks to the discreet devotion of the excellent woman by whom Margaret was brought up, your love is concealed in the deepest mystery. What could disturb it now?"

"Nothing — oh! nothing," cried M. Hardy. "I have almost security for its duration."

"What do you mean, my friend?"

"I do not know if I ought to tell you."

"Have you ever found me indiscreet, my friend?"

"You, good Marcel! how can you suppose such a thing?" said M. Hardy, in a tone of friendly reproach; "no! but I do not like to tell you of my happiness till it is complete; and I am not yet quite certain—"

A servant entered at this moment and said to M. Hardy: "Sir, there is an old gentleman who wishes to speak to you on very pressing business."

"So soon!" said M. Hardy, with a slight movement of impatience. "With your permission, my friend." Then, as M. de Blessac seemed about to withdraw into the next room, M. Hardy added with a smile: "No, no; do not stir. Your presence will shorten the interview."

"But if it be a matter of business, my friend?"

"I do everything openly, as you know." Then, addressing the servant, M. Hardy bade him ask the gentleman to walk in.

"The postilion wishes to know if he is to wait?"

"Certainly; he will take M. de Blessac back to Paris."

The servant withdrew, and presently returned, introducing Rodin, with whom M. de Blessac was not acquainted, his treacherous bargain having been negotiated through another agent.

"M. Hardy?" said Rodin, bowing respectfully to the two friends, and looking from one to the other with an air of inquiry.

"That is my name, sir; what can I do to serve you?" answered the manufacturer kindly; for, at first sight of the humble and ill-dressed old man, he expected an application for assistance.

"M. Francois Hardy," repeated Rodin, as if he wished to make sure of the identity of the person.

"I have had the honor to tell you that I am he."

"I have a private communication to make to you, sir," said Rodin.

"You may speak, sir. This gentleman

is my friend," said M. Hardy, pointing to M. de Blessac.

"But I wish to speak to you alone, sir," resumed Rodin.

M. de Blessac was again about to withdraw, when M. Hardy retained him with a glance, and said to Rodin kindly, for he thought his feelings might be hurt by asking a favor in presence of a third party: "Permit me to inquire if it is on your account or on mine that you wish this interview to be secret?"

"On your account entirely, sir," answered Rodin.

"Then, sir," said M. Hardy, with some surprise, "you may speak out. I have no secrets from this gentleman."

After a moment's silence, Rodin resumed, addressing himself to M. Hardy: "Sir, you deserve, I know, all the good that is said of you; and you therefore command the sympathy of every honest man."

"I hope so, sir."

"Now, as an honest man, I come to render you a service."

"And this service, sir—"

"To reveal to you an infamous piece of treachery, of which you have been the victim."

"I think, sir, you must be deceived."

"I have the proofs of what I assert."

"Proofs?"

"The written proofs of the treachery that I come to reveal: I have them here," answered Rodin. "In a word, a man whom you believed your friend has shamefully deceived you, sir."

"And the name of this man?"

"M. Marcel de Blessac," replied Rodin.

On these words, M. de Blessac started and became pale as death. He could hardly murmur: "Sir—"

But, without looking at his friend, or perceiving his agitation, M. Hardy seized his hand and exclaimed hastily: "Silence, my friend!" Then, while his eye flashed with indignation, he turned toward Rodin, who had not ceased to look him full in the face, and said to him, with an air of lofty disdain: "What! do you accuse M. de Blessac?"

"Yes, I accuse him," replied Rodin, briefly.

"Do you know him?"

"I have never seen him."

"Of what do you accuse him? And how dare you say that he has betrayed me?"

"Two words, if you please," said Rodin, with an emotion which he appeared hardly able to restrain. "If one man of honor

sees another about to be slain by an assassin, ought he not to give the alarm of murder?"

"Yes, sir; but what has that to do—"

"In my eyes, sir, certain treasons are as criminal as murders: I have come to place myself between the assassin and his victim."

"The assassin? the victim?" said M. Hardy, more and more astonished.

"You doubtless know M. de Blessac's writing?" said Rodin.

"Yes, sir."

"Then read this," said Rodin, drawing from his pocket a letter which he handed to M. Hardy.

Casting now for the first time a glance at M. de Blessac, the manufacturer drew back a step, terrified at the deathlike paleness of this man, who, struck dumb with shame, could not find a word to justify himself; for he was far from possessing the audacious effrontery necessary to carry him through his treachery.

"Marcel!" cried M. Hardy, in alarm, and deeply agitated by this unexpected blow. "Marcel! how pale you are! you do not answer!"

"Marcel! this, then, is M. de Blessac?" cried Rodin, feigning the most

painful surprise. "Oh, sir, if I had known—"

"But don't you hear this man, Marcel?" cried M. Hardy. "He says that you have betrayed me infamously." He seized the hand of M. de Blessac. That hand was cold as ice. "Oh, God! oh, God!" said M. Hardy, drawing back in horror; "he makes no answer!"

"Since I am in presence of M. de Blessac," resumed Rodin, "I am forced to ask him if he can deny having addressed many letters to the Rue du Milieu des Ursins, at Paris, under cover of M. Rodin."

M. de Blessac remained dumb. M. Hardy, still unwilling to believe what he saw and heard, convulsively tore open the letter, which Rodin had just delivered to him, and read the first few lines—interrupting the perusal with exclamations of grief and amazement. He did not require to finish the letter to convince himself of the black treachery of M. de Blessac. He staggered; for a moment his senses seemed to abandon him. The horrible discovery made him giddy, and his head swam on his first look down into that abyss of infamy. The loathsome letter dropped from his trembling hands. But soon indigna-

tion, rage, and scorn succeeded this moment of despair, and rushing, pale and terrible, upon M. de Blessac: "Wretch!" he exclaimed, with a threatening gesture. But, pausing as in the act to strike: "No!" he added, with fearful calmness. "It would be to soil my hand."

He turned toward Rodin, who had approached hastily, as if to interpose. "It is not worth while chastising a wretch," said M. Hardy; "but I will press your honest hand, sir—for you have had the courage to unmask a traitor and a coward."

"Sir!" cried M. de Blessac, overcome with shame; "I am at your orders—and—"

He could not finish. The sound of voices was heard behind the door, which opened violently, and an aged woman entered, in spite of the efforts of the servant, exclaiming in an agitated voice: "I tell you, I must speak instantly to your master."

On hearing this voice, and at sight of the pale, weeping woman, M. Hardy, forgetting M. de Blessac, Rodin, the infamous treachery, and all, fell back a step, and exclaimed: "Madame Duparc! you here! What is the matter?"

"Oh, sir! a great misfortune—"

"Margaret!" cried M. Hardy, in a tone of despair.

"She is gone, sir!"

"Gone!" repeated M. Hardy, as horror-struck as if a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet. "Margaret gone!"

"All is discovered. Her mother took her away—three days ago!" said the unhappy woman, in a failing voice.

"Gone! Margaret! It is not true. You deceive me," cried M. Hardy. Refusing to hear more, wild, despairing, he rushed out of the house, threw himself into his carriage, to which the post-horses were still harnessed, waiting for M. de Blessac, and said to the postilion: "To Paris! as fast as you can go!"

. . . . . .

As the carriage, rapid as lightning, started upon the road to Paris, the wind brought nearer the distant sound of the war-song of the Wolves, who were rushing toward the factory. In this impending destruction, see Rodin's subtle hand, administering his fatal blows to clear his way up to the chair of St. Peter, to which he aspired. His tireless, wily course can hardly be darker shadowed by aught save that dread coming horror, the Cholera, whose aid he evoked, and whose health the Bacchanal Queen wildly drank.

That once gay girl and her poor famished

sister; the fair patrician and her Oriental lover; Agricola, the workman, and his veteran father; the smiling Rose-Pompon, and the prematurely withered Jacques Rennepont; Father d'Aigrigny, the mock priest; and Gabriel, the true disciple; with the rest that have been named, and others yet to be pictured, in the blaze or the blots of their life's paths, will be seen in the third and concluding part of this romance, entitled, "THE WANDERING JEW: REDEMPTION."

PART THIRD.

THE REDEMPTION.

CHAPTER I.

THE WANDERING JEW'S CHASTISEMENT.

'Tis night—the moon is brightly shining, the brilliant stars are sparkling in a sky of melancholy calmness, the shrill whistlings of a northerly wind—cold, bleak and evil-bearing—are increasing: winding about, and bursting into violent blasts, with their harsh and hissing gusts, they are sweeping the heights of Montmartre. A man is standing on the very summit of the hill; his lengthened shadow, thrown out by the moon's pale beams, darkens the rocky ground in the distance. The traveler is surveying the huge city lying at his feet—the City of Paris—from whose profundities are cast up its towers, cupolas, domes, and steeples, in the bluish moisture of the

horizon; while from the very center of this sea of stones is rising a luminous vapor, reddening the starry azure of the sky above. It is the distant light of myriad lamps which at night, the season for pleasure, are illuminating the noisy capital.

"No!" said the traveler, "it will not be. The Lord surely will not suffer it. Twice is quite enough. Five centuries ago, the avenging hand of the Almighty drove me hither from the depths of Asia. A solitary wanderer, I left in my track more mourning, despair, disaster, and death, than the innumerable armies of a hundred devastating conquerors could have produced. I then entered this city, and it was decimated. Two centuries ago that inexorable hand which led me through the world again conducted me here; and on that occasion, as on the previous one, that scourge, which at intervals the Almighty binds to my footsteps, ravaged this city, attacking first my brethren, already wearied by wretchedness and toil. My brethren! through me—the laborer of Jerusalem, cursed by the Lord, who in my person cursed the race of laborers—a race always suffering, always disinherited, always slaves, who, like me, go on, on, on, without rest or intermission, without recom-

pense, or hope; until at length, women, men, children, and old men, die under their iron yoke of self-murder, that others in their turn then take up, borne from age to age on their willing but aching shoulders. And here again, for the third time, in the course of five centuries, I have arrived at the summit of one of the hills which overlook the city; and perhaps I bring again with me terror, desolation, and death. And this unhappy city, intoxicated in a whirl of joys, and nocturnal revelries, knows nothing about it—oh! it knows not that I am at its very gate. But no! no! my presence will not be a source of fresh calamity to it. The Lord, in His unsearchable wisdom, has brought me hither across France, making me avoid on my route all but the humblest villages, so that no increase of the funeral knell has marked my journey. And then, moreover, the specter has left me—that specter, livid and green, with its deep bloodshot eyes. When I touched the soil of France, its moist and icy hand abandoned mine—it disappeared. And yet I feel the atmos phere of death surrounding me still. There is no cessation; the biting gusts of this sinister wind, which envelop me in their breath, seem by their envenomed breath to

propagate the scourge. Doubtless the anger of the Lord is appeased. Maybe, my presence here is meant only as a threat, intending to bring those to their senses whom it ought to intimidate. It must be so; for were it otherwise, it would, on the contrary, strike a loud-sounding blow of greater terror, casting at once dread and death into the very heart of the country, into the bosom of this immense city. Oh, no! no! the Lord will have mercy; He will not condemn me to this new affliction. Alas! in this city my brethren are more numerous and more wretched than in any other. And must I bring death to them? No! the Lord will have mercy; for, alas! the seven descendants of my sister are at last all united in this city. And must I bring death to them? Death! instead of that immediate assistance they stand so much in need of? For that woman who, like myself, wanders from one end of the world to the other, has gone now on her everlasting journey, after having confounded their enemies' plots. In vain did she foretell that great evils still threatened those who are akin to me through my sister's blood. The unseen hand by which I am led drives that woman away from me, even as though it were a whirlwind that swept her on. In

vain she entreated and implored at the moment she was leaving those who are so dear to me.—At least, O Lord, permit me to stay until I shall have finished my task! Onward! A few days, for mercy's sake, only a few days! Onward! I leave these whom I am protecting on the very brink of an abyss! Onward! Onward!! And the wandering star is launched afresh on its perpetual course. But her voice traversed through space, calling me to the assistance of my own! When her voice reached me I felt that the offspring of my sister were still exposed to fearful dangers: those dangers are still increasing. Oh, say, say, Lord! shall the descendants of my sister escape those woes which for so many centuries have oppressed my race? Wilt Thou pardon me in them? Wilt Thou punish me in them? Oh! lead them, that they may obey the last wishes of their ancestor. Guide them, that they may join their charitable hearts, their powerful strength, their best wisdom, and their immense wealth, and work together for the future happiness of mankind, thereby, perhaps, enabled to ransom me from my eternal penalties. Let those divine words of the Son of Man, '*Love ye one another!*' be their only aim; and by the assistance of

their all-powerful words, let them contend against and vanquish those false priests who have trampled on the precepts of love, of peace, and hope commanded by the Saviour, setting up in their stead the precepts of hatred, violence, and despair. Those false shepherds, supported by the powerful and wealthy of the world, who in all times have been their accomplices, instead of asking here below a little happiness for my brethren, who have been suffering and groaning for centuries, dare to utter, in Thy name, O Lord! that the poor must always be doomed to the tortures of this world, and that it is criminal in Thine eyes that they should either wish for or hope a mitigation of their sufferings on earth, because the happiness of the few and the wretchedness of nearly all mankind are Thine almighty will. Blasphemies! is it not the contrary of these homicidal words that is more worthy of the name of Divine will? Hear me, O Lord! for mercy's sake. Snatch from their enemies the descendants of my sister, from the artisan up to the king's son. Do not permit them to crush the germ of a mighty and fruitful association, which perhaps, under Thy protection, may take its place among the records of the happiness of mankind. Suffer me, O

Lord! to unite those whom they are endeavoring to divide—to defend those whom they are attacking. Suffer me to bring hope to those from whom hope has fled, to give courage to those who are weak, to uphold those whom evil threatens, and to sustain those who would persevere in well-doing. And then, perhaps, their struggles, their devotedness, their virtues, their miseries, might expiate my sin. Yes, mine—misfortune, misfortune alone, made me unjust and wicked. O Lord! since Thine almighty hand hath brought me hither, for some end unknown to me, disarm Thyself, I implore Thee, of Thine anger, and let not me be the instrument of Thy vengeance! There is enough of mourning in the earth these two years past—Thy creatures have fallen by millions in my footsteps. The world is decimated. A veil of mourning extends from one end of the globe to the other. I have traveled from Asia even to the Frozen Pole, and death has followed in my wake. Dost Thou not hear, O Lord! the universal wailings that mount up to Thee? Have mercy upon all, and upon me. One day, grant me but a single day, that I may collect the descendants of my sister together, and save them!" And uttering these words, the wanderer fell upon

his knees and raised his hands to heaven in a suppliant attitude.

Suddenly the wind howled with redoubled violence; its sharp whistlings changed to a tempest. The Wanderer trembled, and exclaimed in a voice of terror, "O Lord! the blast of death is howling in its rage. It appears as though a whirlwind were lifting me up. Lord, wilt Thou not, then, hear my prayer? The specter! O! do I behold the specter? Yes, there it is; its cadaverous countenance is agitated by convulsive throes, its red eyes are rolling in their orbits. Begone! begone! Oh! its hand—its icy hand has seized on mine! Mercy, Lord, have mercy! 'Onward!' Oh, Lord! this scourge, this terrible avenging scourge! Must I, then again, carry it into this city, must my poor wretched brethren be the first to fall under it—though already so miserable? Mercy, mercy! 'Onward!' And the descendants of my sister—oh, pray, have mercy, mercy! 'Onward!' O Lord, have pity on me! I can no longer keep my footing on the ground; the specter is dragging me over the brow of the hill; my course is as rapid as the death-bearing wind that whistles in my track! I already approach the walls of the city.

Oh, mercy, Lord, mercy on the descendants of my sister—spare them! do not compel me to be their executioner, and let them triumph over their enemies. Onward, onward! The ground is fleeing from under me; I am already at the city gate; oh, yet, Lord, yet there is time; oh, have mercy on this slumbering city, that it may not even now awaken with lamentations of terror, of despair and death! O Lord, I touch the threshold of the gate; verily Thou willest it so, then. 'Tis done —Paris! the scourge is in Thy bosom! oh, cursed, cursed evermore am I. *Onward! on! on!*" *

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* In 1346 the celebrated Black Death ravaged the earth, presenting the same symptoms as the cholera, and the same inexplicable phenomena as to its progress and the results in its route. In 1660 a similar epidemic decimated the world. It is well known that when the cholera first broke out in Paris it had taken a wide and unaccountable leap; and, also memorable, a north-east wind prevailed during its utmost fierceness.

CHAPTER II.

THE DESCENDANTS OF THE WANDERING JEW.

THAT lonely wayfarer whom we have heard so plaintively urging to be relieved of his gigantic burden of misery, spoke of "his sister's descendants" being of all ranks, from the workingman to the king's son. They were seven in number, who had, in the year 1832, been led to Paris, directly or indirectly, by a bronze medal which distinguished them from others, bearing these words:

VICTIM of L. C. D. J. Pray for me! ——— PARIS, February the 13th, 1682.	IN PARIS, Rue Saint François No. 3, In a century and a half you will be. February the 13th, 1832. ——— PRAY FOR ME!

The son of the King of Mundi had lost his father and his domains in India by the irresistible march of the English, and was but in title Prince Djalma. Spite of at-

tempts to make his departure from the East delayed until after the period when he could have obeyed his medal's command, he had reached France by the second month of 1832. Nevertheless, the results of shipwreck had detained him from Paris till after that date. A second possessor of this token had remained unaware of its existence, only discovered by accident. But an enemy who sought to thwart the union of these seven members had shut her up in a mad-house, from which she was released only after that day. Not alone was she in imprisonment. An old Bonapartist, General Simon, Marshal of France, and Duke de Ligny, had left a wife in Russian exile, while he (unable to follow Napoleon to St. Helena) continued to fight the English in India by means of Prince Djalma's Sepoys, whom he drilled. On the latter's defeat, he had meant to accompany his young friend to Europe, induced the more by finding that the latter's mother, a Frenchwoman, had left him such another bronze medal as he knew his wife to have had.

Unhappily, his wife had perished in Siberia, without his knowing it, any more than he did that she had left twin daughters, Rose and Blanche. Fortunately for

them, one who had served their father in the Grenadiers of the Guard, Francis Baudoin, nicknamed Dagobert, undertook to fulfill the dying mother's wishes, inspired by the medal. Saving a check at Leipsic, where one Morok the lion-tamer's panther had escaped from its cage and killed Dagobert's horse, and a subsequent imprisonment (which the Wandering Jew's succoring hand had terminated), the soldier and his orphan charges had reached Paris in safety and in time. But there, a renewal of the foe's attempts had gained its end. By skillful devices, Dagobert and his son Agricola were drawn out of the way while Rose and Blanche Simon were decoyed into a nunnery, under the eyes of Dagobert's wife. But she had been bound against interfering by the influence of the Jesuit confessional. The fourth was M. Hardy, a manufacturer, and the fifth, Jacques Rennepont, a drunken scamp of a workman, who were more easily fended off, the latter in a sponging house, the former by a friend's lure. Adrienne de Cardoville, daughter of the Count of Rennepont, who had also been Duke of Cardoville, was the lady who had been unwarrantably placed in the lunatic asylum. The fifth, unaware of the medal, was Gabriel, a youth, who

had been brought up, though a foundling, in Dagobert's family, as a brother to Agricola. He had entered holy orders, and more, was a Jesuit, in name though not in heart. Unlike the others, his return from abroad had been smoothed. He had signed away all his future prospects, for the benefit of the order of Loyola, and, moreover, executed a more complete deed of transfer on the day, the 13th of February, 1832, when he, alone of the heirs, stood in the room of the house, No. 3, Rue St. François, claiming what was a vast surprise for the Jesuits, who, a hundred and fifty years before, had discovered that Count Marius de Rennepont had secreted a considerable amount of his wealth, all of which had been confiscated to them, in those painful days of dragoonings, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. They had bargained for some thirty or forty millions of francs to be theirs, by educating Gabriel into resigning his inheritance to them, but it was two hundred and twelve millions which the Jesuit representatives (Father d'Aigrigny and his secretary, Rodin) were amazed to hear their nursling placed in possession of. They had the treasure in their hands, in fact, when a woman of strangely sad beauty had mysteriously entered the room where

the will had been read, and laid a paper before the notary. It was a codicil, duly drawn up and signed, deferring the carrying out of the testament until the first day of June the same year. The Jesuits fled from the house, in rage and intense disappointment. Father d'Aigrigny was so horror-stricken at the defeat that he bade his secretary at once write off to Rome that the Rennepont inheritance had escaped them, and hopes to seize it again were utterly at an end. Upon this, Rodin had revolted, and shown that he had authority to command where he had, so far, most humbly obeyed. Many such spies hang about their superior's heels, with full powers to become the governor in turn at a moment's notice. Thenceforward, he, Rodin, had taken the business into his own hands. He had let Rose and Blanche Simon out of the convent into their father's arms. He had gone in person to release Adrienne de Cardoville from the asylum. More, having led her to sigh for Prince Djalma, he prompted the latter to burn for her.

He let not M. Hardy escape. A friend whom the latter treated as a brother had been shown up to him as a mere spy of the Jesuits; the woman whom he adored, a

wedded woman, alas! who had loved him in spite of her vows, had been betrayed. Her mother had compelled her to hide her shame in America, and, as she had often said—"Much as you are endeared to me, I cannot waver between you and my mother!" so she had obeyed, without one farewell word to him. Confess, Rodin was a more dexterous man than his late master! In the pages that ensue further proofs of his superiority in baseness and satanic heartlessness will not be wanting.

CHAPTER III.

THE ATTACK.

On M. Hardy's learning from the confidential go-between of the lovers that his mistress had been taken away by her mother, he turned from Rodin and dashed away in a post carriage. At the same moment, as loud as the rattle of the wheels, there arose the shouts of a band of workmen and rioters, hired by the Jesuit's emissaries, coming to attack Hardy's operatives. An old grudge long existing between them and a rival manufacturer's—

Baron Tripeaud — laborers, fanned the flames. When M. Hardy had left the factory, Rodin, who was not prepared for this sudden departure, returned slowly to his hackney-coach; but he stopped suddenly, and started with pleasure and surprise, when he saw, at some distance, Marshal Simon and his father advancing toward one of the wings of the Common Dwelling-house; for an accidental circumstance had so far delayed the interview of the father and son.

"Very well," said Rodin. "Better and better! Now, only let my man have found out and persuaded little Rose-Pompon!"

And Rodin hastened toward his hackney-coach. At this moment, the wind, which continued to rise, brought to the ear of the Jesuit the war song of the approaching Wolves.

The workman was in the garden. The marshal said to him, in a voice of such deep emotion that the old man started: "Father, I am very unhappy."

A painful expression, until then concealed, suddenly darkened the countenance of the marshal.

"You unhappy?" cried Father Simon, anxiously, as he pressed nearer to the marshal.

"For some days my daughters have appeared constrained in manner, and lost in thought. During the first moments of our reunion, they were mad with joy and happiness. Suddenly, all was changed; they are becoming more and more sad. Yesterday, I detected tears in their eyes; then, deeply moved, I clasped them in my arms, and implored them to tell me the cause of their sorrow. Without answering, they threw themselves on my neck, and covered my face with their tears."

"It is strange. To what do you attribute this alteration?"

"Sometimes, I think I have not sufficiently concealed from them the grief occasioned me by the loss of their mother, and they are perhaps miserable that they do not suffice for my happiness. And yet (inexplicable as it is) they seem not only to understand, but to share my sorrow. Yesterday, Blanche said to me: 'How much happier still would we be, if our mother were with us!—'"

"Sharing your sorrow, they cannot reproach you with it. There must be some other cause for their grief."

"Yes," said the marshal, looking fixedly at his father; "yes—to penetrate this secret —it would be necessary not to leave them."

"What do you mean?"

"First learn, father, what are the duties which would keep me here; then you shall know those which may take me away from you, from my daughters, and from my other child."

"What other child?"

"The son of my old friend, the Indian prince."

"Djalma? Is there anything the matter with him?"

"Father, he frightens me. I told you, father, of his mad and unhappy passion for Mdlle. de Cardoville."

"Does that frighten you, my son?" said the old man, looking at the marshal with surprise. "Djamla is only eighteen, and, at that age, one love drives away another."

"You have no idea of the ravages which the passion has already made in the ardent, indomitable boy; sometimes, fits of savage ferocity follow the most painful dejection. Yesterday I came suddenly upon him; his eyes were bloodshot, his features contracted with rage; yielding to an impulse of mad fury, he was piercing with his poniard a cushion of red cloth, while he exclaimed, panting for breath, 'Ha! blood!—I will have blood!' 'Unhappy boy!' I said to him, 'what means this insane passion?'

'I'm killing the man!' he replied, in a hollow and savage voice: it is thus he designates his supposed rival."

"There is indeed something terrible," said the old man, "in such a passion, in such a heart."

"At other times," resumed the marshal, "it is against Mdlle. de Cardoville that his rage bursts forth; and at others, against himself. I have been obliged to remove his weapons, for a man who came with him from Java, and who appears much attached to him, has informed me that he suspected him of entertaining some thoughts of suicide."

"Unfortunate boy!"

"Well, father," said Marshal Simon, with profound bitterness; "it is at the moment when my daughters and my adopted son require all my solicitude that I am perhaps on the eve of quitting them."

"Of quitting them?"

"Yes, to fulfill a still more sacred duty than that imposed by friendship or family," said the marshal, in so grave and solemn a tone that his father exclaimed, with deep emotion:

"What can this duty be?"

"Father," said the marshal, after remaining a moment in thoughtful silence,

"who made me what I am? Who gave me the ducal title and the marshal's bâton?"

"Napoleon."

"For you, the stern republican, I know that he lost all his value, when, from the first citizen of a republic, he became an emperor."

"I cursed his weakness," said Father Simon, sadly; "the demi-god sunk into a man."

"But for me, father—for me, the soldier, who have always fought beside him, or under his eye—for me, whom he raised from the lowest rank in the army to the highest—for me, whom he loaded with benefits and marks of affection—for me, he was more than a hero, he was a friend—and there was as much gratitude as admiration in my idolatry for him. When he was exiled, I would fain have shared his exile; they refused me that favor; then I conspired; then I drew my sword against those who had robbed his son of the crown which France had given him."

"And, in your position, you did well, Pierre; without sharing your admiration, I understood your gratitude. The projects of exile, the conspiracies—I approved them all—you know it."

M. HARDY.

—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4, p. 192.

"Well, then, that disinherited child, in whose name I conspired seventeen years ago, is now of age to wield his father's sword."

"Napoleon II.!" exclaimed the old man, looking at his son with surprise and extreme anxiety; "the king of Rome!"

"King? no; he is no longer king. Napoleon? no; he is no longer Napoleon. They have given him some Austrian name, because the other frightened them. Everything frightens them. Do you know what they are doing with the son of the Emperor?" resumed the marshal, with painful excitement. "They are torturing him—killing him by inches!"

"Who told you this?"

"Somebody who knows, whose words are but too true. Yes; the son of the Emperor struggles with all his strength against a premature death. With his eyes turned toward France, he waits—he waits—and no one comes—no one—out of all the men that his father made as great as they once were little, not one thinks of that crowned child, whom they are stifling till he dies."

"But you think of him?"

"Yes; but I had first to learn—oh! there is no doubt of it, for I have not derived all my information from the same source—I

had first to learn the cruel fate of this youth, to whom I also swore allegiance; for one day, as I have told you, the Emperor, proud and loving father as he was, showed him to me in his cradle, and said: 'My old friend, you will be to the son what you have been to the father: who loves us, loves our France.' "

"Yes, I know it. Many times you have repeated those words to me, and, like yourself, I have been moved by them."

"Well, father! suppose, informed of the sufferings of the son of the Emperor, I had seen—with the positive certainty that I was not deceived—a letter from a person of high rank in the court of Vienna, offering to a man, that was still faithful to the Emperor's memory, the means of communicating with the King of Rome, and perhaps saving him from his tormentors—"

"What next?" said the workman, looking fixedly at his son. "Suppose Napoleon II. once at liberty—"

"What next?" exclaimed the marshal. Then he added, in a suppressed voice: "Do you think, father, that France is insensible to the humiliations she endures? Do you think that the memory of the Emperor is extinct? No, no; it is, above all,

in the days of our country's degradation, that she whispers that sacred name. How would it be, then, were that name to rise glorious on the frontier, reviving in his son? Do you not think that the heart of all France would beat for him?"

"This implies a conspiracy—against the present government—with Napoleon II. for a watchword," said the workman. "This is very serious."

"I told you, father, that I was very unhappy; judge if it be not so," cried the marshal. "Not only I ask myself if I ought to abandon my children and you, to run the risk of so daring an enterprise, but I ask myself if I am not bound to the present government, which, in acknowledging my rank and title, if it bestowed no favor, at least did me an act of justice. How shall I decide?—abandon all that I love, or remain insensible to the tortures of the son of the Emperor—of that Emperor to whom I owe everything—to whom I have sworn fidelity, both to himself and child? Shall I lose this only opportunity, perhaps, of saving him, or shall I conspire in his favor? Tell me, if I exaggerate what I owe to the memory of the Emperor? Decide for me, father! During a whole sleepless night, I strove to discover, in the midst of this

chaos, the line prescribed by honor; but I only wandered from indecision to indecision. You alone, father—you alone, I repeat, can direct me."

After remaining for some moments in deep thought, the old man was about to answer, when some person, running across the little garden, opened the door hastily, and entered the room in which were the marshal and his father. It was Olivier, the young workman, who had been able to effect his escape from the village in which the Wolves had assembled.

"M. Simon! M. Simon!" cried he, pale and panting for breath. "They are here—close at hand. They have come to attack the factory."

"Who?" cried the old man, rising hastily.

"The Wolves, quarrymen, and stone-cutters, joined on the road by a crowd of people from the neighborhood, and vagabonds from town. Do you not hear them? They are shouting, 'Death to the Devourers!'"

The clamor was indeed approaching, and grew more and more distinct.

"It is the same noise that I heard just now," said the marshal, rising in his turn.

"There are more than two hundred of

them, M. Simon," said Olivier; "they are armed with clubs and stones, and unfortunately the greater part of our workmen are in Paris. We are not above forty here in all; the women and children are already flying to their chambers, screaming for terror. Do you not hear them?"

The ceiling shook beneath the tread of many hasty feet.

"Will this attack be a serious one?" said the marshal to his father, who appeared more and more dejected.

"Very serious," said the old man; "there is nothing more fierce than these combats between different unions; and everything has been done lately to excite the people of the neighborhood against the factory."

"If you are so inferior in number," said the marshal, "you must begin by barricading all the doors—and then—"

He was unable to conclude. A burst of ferocious cries shook the windows of the room, and seemed so near and loud that the marshal, his father, and the young workman rushed out into the little garden, which was bounded on one side by a wall that separated it from the fields. Suddenly, while the shouts redoubled in violence, a shower of large stones, intended

to break the windows of the house, smashed some of the panes on the first story, struck against the wall, and fell into the garden, all around the marshal and his father. By a fatal chance, one of these large stones struck the old man on the head. He staggered, bent forward, and fell bleeding into the arms of Marshal Simon, just as arose from without, with increased fury, the savage cries of, "Death to the Devourers!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE WOLVES AND THE DEVOURERS.

It was a frightful thing to view the approach of the lawless crowd, whose first act of hostility had been so fatal to Marshal Simon's father. One wing of the Common Dwelling-house, which joined the garden wall on that side, was next to the fields. It was there that the Wolves began their attack. The precipitation of their march, the halt they had made at two public-houses on the road, their ardent impatience for the approaching struggle, had inflamed these men to a high pitch of savage excitement. Having

discharged their first shower of stones, most of the assailants stooped down to look for more ammunition. Some of them, to do so with greater ease, held their bludgeons between their teeth; others had placed them against the wall; here and there groups had formed tumultuously round the principal leaders of the band; the most neatly dressed of these men wore frocks, with caps, while others were almost in rags, for, as we have already said, many of the hangers-on at the barriers, and people without any profession, had joined the troop of the Wolves, whether welcome or not. Some hideous women, with tattered garments, who always seem to follow in the track of such people, accompanied them on this occasion, and, by their cries and fury, inflamed still more the general excitement. One of them, tall, robust, with purple complexion, bloodshot eyes, and toothless jaws, had a handkerchief over her head, from beneath which escaped her yellow, frowsy hair. Over her ragged gown she wore an old plaid shawl, crossed over her bosom, and tied behind her back. This hag seemed possessed with a demon. She had tucked up her half-torn sleeves; in one hand she brandished a stick, in the other she grasped

a huge stone; her companions called her Ciboule (scullion).

This horrible hag exclaimed, in a hoarse voice: "I'll bite the women of the factory; I'll make them bleed."

The ferocious words were received with applause by her companions, and with savage cries of "Ciboule forever!" which excited her to frenzy.

Among the other leaders was a small, dry, pale man, with the face of a ferret, and a black beard all round the chin; he wore a scarlet Greek cap, and beneath his long blouse, perfectly new, appeared a pair of neat cloth trousers, strapped over thin boots. This man was evidently of a different condition of life from that of the other persons in the troop; it was he, in particular, who ascribed the most irritating and insulting language to the workmen of the factory, with regard to the inhabitants of the neighborhood. He howled a great deal, but he carried neither stick nor stone. A full-faced, fresh-colored man, with a formidable bass voice, like a chorister's, asked him: "Will you not have a shot at those impious dogs, who might bring down the Cholera on the country, as the curate told us?"

"I will have a better shot than you,"

said the little man, with a singular sinister smile.

"And with what, I'd like to see?"

"Probably with this," said the little man, stooping to pick up a large stone; but, as he bent, a well-filled though light bag, which he appeared to carry under his blouse, fell to the ground.

"Look, you are losing both bag and baggage," said the other; "it does not seem very heavy."

"They are samples of wool," answered the man with the ferret's face, as he hastily picked up the bag and replaced it under his blouse; then he added: "Attention! the big blaster is going to speak." And, in fact, he who exercised the most complete ascendency over this irritated crowd was the terrible quarryman. His gigantic form towered so much above the multitude that his great head, bound in its ragged handkerchief, and his Herculean shoulders, covered with a fallow goat-skin, were always visible above the level of that dark and swarming crowd, only relieved here and there by a few women's caps, like so many white points. Seeing to what a degree of exasperation the minds of the crowd had reached, the small number of honest, but misguided workmen, who had

allowed themselves to be drawn into this dangerous enterprise, under the pretext of a quarrel between rival unions, now fearing for the consequences of the struggle, tried, but too late, to abandon the main body. Pressed close, and, as it were, girt in with the more hostile groups, dreading to pass for cowards, or to expose themselves to the bad treatment of the majority, they were forced to wait for a more favorable moment to effect their escape. To the savage cheers, which had accompanied the first discharge of stones, succeeded a deep silence commanded by the stentorian voice of the quarryman.

"The Wolves have howled," he exclaimed; "let us wait and see how the Devourers will answer, and when they will begin the fight."

"We must draw them out of their factory, and fight them on neutral ground," said the little man with the ferret's face, who appeared to be the thieves' advocate; "otherwise there would be a trespass."

"What do we care about trespass?" cried the horrible hag, Ciboule; "in or out, I will tear the chits of the factory."

"Yes, yes," cried other hideous creatures, as ragged as Ciboule herself; "we must not leave all to the men."

"We must have our fun too!"

"The women of the factory say that all the women of the neighborhood are drunken drabs," cried the little man with the ferret's face.

"Good! we'll pay them for it."

"The women shall have their share."

"That's our business."

"They like to sing in their Common House," cried Ciboule; "we will make them sing the wrong side of their mouths, in the key of 'Oh, dear me!' "

This pleasantry was received with shouts, hootings, and furious stamping of feet, to which the stentorian voice of the quarryman put a term by roaring: "Silence!"

"Silence! silence!" repeated the crowd. "Hear the blaster!"

"If the Devourers are cowards enough not to dare to show themselves, after a second volley of stones, there is a door down there which we can break open, and we will soon hunt them from their holes."

"It would be better to draw them out, so that none might remain in the factory," said the little old man with the ferret's face, who appeared to have some secret motive.

"A man fights where he can," cried the quarryman, in a voice of thunder; "all

right, if we can but once catch hold. We could fight on a sloping roof, or on top of a wall—couldn't we, my Wolves?"

"Yes, yes!" cried the crowd, still more excited by those savage words; "if they don't come out, we will break in."

"We will see their fine palace!"

"The pagans haven't even a chapel," said the bass voice. "The curate has damned them all!"

"Why should they have a palace, and we nothing but dog-kennels?"

"Hardy's workmen say that kennels are good enough for such as you," said the little man with the ferret's face.

"Yes, yes! they said so."

"We'll break all their traps."

"We'll pull down their bazaar."

"We'll throw the house out of the windows."

"When we have made the mealy-mouthed chits sing," cried Ciboule, "we will make them dance to the clatter of stones on their heads."

"Come, my Wolves! attention!" cried the quarryman, still in the same stentorian voice; "one more volley, and if the Devourers do not come out, down with the door!"

This proposition was received with

cheers of savage ardor, and the quarryman, whose voice rose above the tumult, cried with all the strength of his herculean lungs: "Attention, my Wolves. Make ready! all together. Now, are you ready?"

"Yes, yes—all ready!"

"Then present!—fire!" And, for the second time, a shower of enormous stones poured upon that side of the Common Dwelling-house which was turned toward the fields. A part of these projectiles broke such of the windows as had been spared by the first volley. To the sharp smashing and cracking of glass were joined the ferocious cries uttered in chorus by this formidable mob, drunk with its own excesses: "Death to the Devourers!"

Soon these outcries became perfectly frantic, when, through the broken windows, the assailants perceived women running in terror, some with children in their arms, and others raising their hands to Heaven, calling aloud for help; while a few, bolder than the rest, leaned out of the windows, and tried to fasten the outside blinds.

"There come the ants out of their holes!" cried Ciboule, stooping to pick up a stone. "We must have a fling at them for luck!" The stone, hurled by the steady, masculine

hand of the virago, went straight to its mark, and struck an unfortunate woman who was trying to close one of the shutters.

"Hit in the white!" cried the hideous creature.

"Well done, Ciboule!—you've rapped her *coker-nut!*" cried a voice.

"Ciboule forever!"

"Come out, you Devourers, if you dare!"

"They have said a hundred times that the neighbors were too cowardly even to come and look at their house," squealed the little man with the ferret's face.

"And now they show the white feather!"

"If they will not come out," cried the quarryman, in a voice of thunder, "let us smoke them out!"

"Yes, yes!"

"Let's break open the door!"

"We are sure to find them!"

"Come on! come on!"

The crowd, with the quarryman at their head, and Ciboule not far from him, brandishing a stick, advanced tumultuously toward one of the great doors. The ground shook beneath the rapid tread of the mob, which had now ceased shouting; but the confused, and, as it were, subterraneous noise, sounded even more ominous than

those savage cries. The Wolves soon arrived opposite the massive oaken door. At the moment the blaster raised a sledge-hammer, the door opened suddenly. Some of the most determined of the assailants were about to rush in at this entrance; but the quarryman stepped back, extending his arm as if to moderate their ardor and impose silence. Then his followers gathered round him.

The half open door discovered a party of workmen, unfortunately by no means numerous, but with countenances full of resolution. They had armed themselves hastily with forks, iron bars, and clubs.

Agricola, who was their leader, held in his hand a heavy sledge-hammer. The young workman was very pale; but the fire of his eye, his menacing look, and the intrepid assurance of his bearing, showed that his father's blood boiled in his veins, and that in such a struggle he might become fear-inspiring. Yet he succeeded in restraining himself, and challenged the quarryman, in a firm voice:

"What do you want?"

"A fight!" thundered the blaster.

"Yes, yes! a fight!" repeated the crowd.

"Silence, my Wolves!" cried the quarryman, as he turned round and stretched

forth his large hand toward the multitude. Then, addressing Agricola, he said: "The Wolves have come to ask for fight."

"With whom?"

"With the Devourers."

"There are no Devourers here," replied Agricola; "we are only peaceable workmen. So begone."

"Well! here are the Wolves that will eat your quiet workmen."

"The Wolves will eat no one here," said Agricola, looking full at the quarryman, who approached him with a threatening air; "they can only frighten little children."

"Oh! you think so," said the quarryman, with a savage sneer. Then, raising his weapon, he shook it in Agricola's face, exclaiming: "Is that any laughing matter?"

"Is that?" answered Agricola, with a rapid movement, parrying the stone-sledge with his own hammer.

"Iron against iron — hammer against hammer—that suits me," said the quarryman.

"It does not matter what suits you," answered Agricola, hardly able to restrain himself. "You have broken our windows, frightened our women, and wounded—per-

haps killed—the oldest workman in the factory, who at this moment lies bleeding in the arms of his son." Here Agricola's voice trembled in spite of himself. "It is, I think, enough."

"No; the Wolves are hungry for more," answered the blaster; "you must come out (cowards that you are!), and fight us on the plain."

"Yes! yes! battle!—let them come out!" cried the crowd, howling, hissing, waving their sticks, and pushing further into the small space which separated them from the door.

"We will have no battle," answered Agricola, "we will not leave our home; but if you have the misfortune to pass this," said Agricola, throwing his cap upon the threshold, and setting his foot on it with an intrepid air, "if you pass this, you attack us in our own house, and you will be answerable for all that may happen."

"There or elsewhere we will have the fight! the Wolves must eat the Devourers. Now for the attack!" cried the fierce quarryman, raising his hammer to strike Agricola.

But the latter, throwing himself on one side by a sudden leap, avoided the blow,

and struck with his hammer full at the chest of the quarryman, who staggered for a moment, but instantly recovering his legs, rushed furiously on Agricola, crying: "Follow me, Wolves!"

CHAPTER V.

THE RETURN.

As soon as the combat had begun between Agricola and the blaster, the general fight became terrible, ardent, implacable. A flood of assailants, following the quarryman's steps, rushed into the house with irresistible fury: others, unable to force their way through this dreadful crowd, where the more impetuous squeezed, stifled, and crushed those who were less so, went round in another direction, broke through some lattice work, and thus placed the people of the factory, as it were, between two fires. Some resisted courageously; others seeing Ciboule, followed by some of her horrible companions, and by several of the most ill-looking ruffians, hastily enter that part of the Common Dwelling-house in which the women had taken refuge, hur-

ried in pursuit of this band; but some of the hag's companions having faced about, and vigorously defended the entrance of the staircase against the workmen, Ciboule, with three or four like herself, and about the same number of no less ignoble men, rushed through the rooms, with an intention of robbing or destroying all that came in their way. A door, which at first resisted their efforts, was soon broken through; Ciboule rushed into the apartment with a stick in her hand, her hair disheveled, furious, and, as it were, maddened with the noise and tumult. A beautiful young girl (it was Angela) who appeared anxious to defend the entrance to a second chamber, threw herself on her knees, pale and supplicating, and, raising her clasped hands, exclaimed: "Do not hurt my mother!"

"I'll serve you out first, and your mother afterward," replied the horrible woman, throwing herself on the poor girl, and endeavoring to tear her face with her nails, while the rest of the ruffianly band broke the glass and the clock with their sticks, and possessed themselves of some articles of wearing apparel.

Angela, struggling with Ciboule, uttered loud cries of distress, and still attempted

to guard the room in which her mother had taken refuge; while the latter, leaning from the window, called Agricola to their assistance. The smith was now engaged with the huge blaster. In a close struggle, their hammers had become useless, and with bloodshot eyes and clinched teeth, chest to chest, and limbs twined together like two serpents, they made the most violent efforts to overthrow each other. Agricola, bent forward, held under his right arm the left leg of the quarryman, which he had seized in parrying a violent kick; but such was the herculean strength of the leader of the Wolves that he remained firm as a tower, though resting only on one leg. With the hand that was still free (for the other was gripped by Agricola as in a vise), he endeavored with violent blows to break the jaws of the smith, who, leaning his head forward, pressed his forehead hard against the breast of his adversary.

"The Wolf will break the Devourer's teeth, and he shall devour no more," said the quarryman.

"You are no true Wolf," answered the smith, redoubling his efforts; "the true Wolves are honest fellows, and do not come ten against one."

"True or false, I will break your teeth."

"And I your paw," said the smith, giving so violent a wrench to the leg of the quarryman that the latter uttered a cry of acute pain, and, with the rage of a wild beast, butting suddenly forward with his head, succeeded in biting Agricola in the side of the neck.

The pang of this bite forced Agricola to make a movement, which enabled the quarryman to disengage his leg. Then, with a superhuman effort he threw himself with his whole weight on Agricola, and brought him to the ground, falling himself upon him.

At this juncture, Angela's mother, leaning from one of the windows of the Common Dwelling-house, exclaimed in a heart-rending voice: "Help, Agricola! they are killing my child!"

"Let me go—and on my honor—I will fight you to-morrow, or when you will," said Agricola, panting for breath.

"No warmed-up food for me; I eat all hot," answered the quarryman, seizing the smith by the throat, while he tried to place one of his knees upon his chest.

"Help! they are killing my child!" cried Angela's mother, in a voice of despair.

"Mercy! I ask mercy! Let me go!"

said Agricola, making the most violent efforts to escape.

"I am too hungry," answered the quarryman.

Exasperated by the terror which Angela's danger occasioned him, Agricola redoubled his efforts, when the quarryman suddenly felt his thigh seized by the sharp teeth of a dog, and at the same instant received from a vigorous hand three or four heavy blows with a stick upon his head. He relaxed his grip, and fell stunned upon his hand and knee, while he mechanically raised his other arm to parry the blows, which ceased as soon as Agricola was delivered.

"Father, you have saved me!" cried the smith, springing up. "If only I am in time to rescue Angela!"

"Run! never mind me!" answered Dagobert; and Agricola rushed into the house.

Dagobert, accompanied by Spoilsport, had come, as we have already said, to bring Marshal Simon's daughters to their grandfather. Arriving in the midst of the tumult, the soldier had collected a few workmen to defend the entrance of the chamber, to which the marshal's father had been carried in a dying state. It was from this post that the soldier had seen

Agricola's danger. Soon after, the rush of the conflict separated Dagobert from the quarryman, who remained for some moments insensible. Arrived in two bounds at the Common Dwelling house, Agricola succeeded in forcing his way through the men who defended the staircase, and rushed into the corridor that led to Angela's chamber. At the moment he reached it, the unfortunate girl was mechanically guarding her face with both hands against Ciboule, who, furious as the hyena over his prey, was trying to scratch and disfigure her.

To spring upon the horrible hag, seize her by her yellow hair with irresistible hand, drag her backward, and then with one cuff stretch her full length upon the ground, was for Agricola an achievement as rapid as thought. Furious with rage, Ciboule rose again almost instantly; but at this moment, several workmen, who had followed close upon Agricola, were able to attack with advantage, and while the smith lifted the fainting form of Angela, and carried her into the next room, Ciboule and her band were driven from that part of the house.

After the first fire of the assault, the small number of real Wolves, who, as

Agricola said, were in the main honest fellows, but had the weakness to let themselves be drawn into this enterprise, under the pretext of a quarrel between rival unions, seeing the excesses committed by the rabble who accompanied them, turned suddenly round and ranged themselves on the side of the Devourers.

"There are no longer here either Wolves or Devourers," said one of the most determined Wolves to Olivier, with whom he had been fighting roughly and fairly; "there are none here but honest workmen, who must unite to drive out a set of scoundrels that have come only to break and pillage."

"Yes," added another; "it was against our will that they began by breaking your windows."

"The big blaster did it all," said another; "the true Wolves wash their hands of him. We shall soon settle his account."

"We may fight every day—but we ought to esteem each other." *

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*We wish it to be understood that the necessities of our story alone have made the Wolves the assailants. While endeavoring to paint the evils arising from the abuse of the spirit of association, we do not wish to ascribe a character of savage hostility to one sect rather than to the

GOBINET.
—The Wandering Jew. Vol. 4, p. 216.

This defection of a portion of the assailants (unfortunately but a small portion) gave new spirit to the workmen of the factory, and all together, Wolves and Devourers, though very inferior in number, opposed themselves to the band of vagabonds, who were proceeding to new excesses. Some of these wretches, still further excited by the little man with the ferret's face, a secret emissary of Baron Tripeaud, now rushed in a mass toward the workshops of M. Hardy. Then began a lamentable devastation. These people, seized with the mania of destruction, broke without remorse machines of the greatest value

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other—to the Wolves more than to the Devourers. The Wolves, a club of united stone-cutters, are generally industrious, intelligent workmen, whose situation is the more worthy of interest, as not only their labors, conducted with mathematical precision, are of the rudest and most wearisome kind, but they are likewise out of work during three or four months of the year, their profession being, unfortunately, one of those which the winter condemns to a forced cessation. A number of Wolves, in order to perfect themselves in their trade, attend every evening a course of linear geometry, applied to the cutting of stone, analogous to that given by M. Agricole Perdignier, for the benefit of carpenters. Several working stone-cutters sent an architectural model in plaster to the last exhibition.

and most delicate construction; half-manufactured articles were pitilessly destroyed; a savage emulation seemed to inspire these barbarians, and those workshops, so lately the model of order and well-regulated economy, were soon nothing but a wreck; the courts were strewed with fragments of all kinds of wares, which were thrown from the windows with ferocious outcries or savage bursts of laughter. Then, still thanks to the incitements of the little man with the ferret's face, the books of M. Hardy, archives of commercial industry, so indispensable to the trader, were scattered to the wind, torn, trampled under foot, in a sort of infernal dance, composed of all that was most impure in this assembly of low, filthy, and ragged men and women, who held each other by the hand, and whirled round and round with horrible clamor. Strange and painful contrast! At the height of the stunning noise of these horrid deeds of tumult and devastation, a scene of imposing and mournful calm was taking place in the chamber of Marshal Simon's father, the door of which was guarded by a few devoted men. The old workman was stretched on his bed, with a bandage across his blood-stained white hair. His countenance was livid,

his breathing oppressed, his look fixed and glazed.

Marshal Simon, standing at the head of the bed, bending over his father, watched in despairing anguish the least sign of consciousness on the part of the dying man, near whom was a physician, with his finger on the failing pulse. Rose and Blanche, brought hither by Dagobert, were kneeling beside the bed, their hands clasped, and their eyes bathed in tears; a little further, half hidden in the shadows of the room, for the hours had passed quickly and the night was at hand, stood Dagobert himself, with his arms crossed upon his breast and his features painfully contracted. A profound and solemn silence reigned in this chamber, only interrupted by the broken sobs of Rose and Blanche, or by Father Simon's hard breathing. The eyes of the marshal were dry, gloomy, and full of fire. He only withdrew them from his father's face to interrogate the physician by a look. There are strange coincidences in life. That physician was Dr. Baleinier. The asylum of the doctor being close to the barrier that was nearest to the factory, and his fame being widely spread in the neighborhood, they had run to fetch him on the first call for medical assistance.

Suddenly, Dr. Baleinier made a movement; the marshal, who had not taken his eyes off him, exclaimed: "Is there any hope?"

"At least, my lord duke, the pulse revives a little."

"He is saved!" said the marshal.

"Do not cherish false hopes, my lord duke," answered the doctor, gravely; "the pulse revives, owing to the powerful applications to the feet, but I know not what will be the issue of the crisis."

"Father! father! do you hear me?" cried the marshal, seeing the old man slightly move his head, and feebly raise his eyelids. He soon opened his eyes, and this time their intelligence had returned.

"Father! you live—you know me!" cried the marshal, giddy with joy and hope.

"Pierre! are you there?" said the old man, in a weak voice. "Your hand—give it—" and he made a feeble movement.

"Here, father!" cried the marshal, as he pressed the hand of the old man in his own.

Then, yielding to an impulse of delight, he bent over his father, covered his hands, face, and hair with kisses, and repeated: "He lives! kind Heaven, he lives! he is saved!"

At this instant, the noise of the struggle which had recommenced between the rabble, the Wolves and the Devourers, reached the ears of the dying man.

"That noise! that noise!" said he; "they are fighting."

"It is growing less, I think," said the marshal, in order not to agitate his father.

"Pierre," said the old man, in a weak and broken voice, "I have not long to live."

"Father—"

"Let me speak, child; if I can but tell you all:"

"Sir," said Baleinier piously, to the old workman, "Heaven may perhaps work a miracle in your favor; show yourself grateful, and allow a priest—"

"A priest! Thank you, sir—I have my son," said the old man; "in his arms, I will render up my soul—which has always been true and honest."

"You die?" exclaimed the marshal; "no! no!"

"Pierre," said the old man, in a voice which, firm at first, gradually grew fainter, "just now—you asked my advice—in a very serious matter. I think that the wish to tell you your duty—has recalled me—for a moment—to life—for I should be miser-

able—if I thought you in a road unworthy of yourself and me. Listen to me, my son—my noble son—at this last hour, a father cannot deceive himself. You have a great duty to perform under pain—of not acting like a man of honor—under pain of neglecting my last will. You ought, without hesitation—"

Here the voice failed the old man. When he had pronounced the last sentence, he became quite unintelligible. The only words that Marshal Simon could distinguish were these: "Napoleon II.—oath—dishonor—my son!"

Then the old workman again moved his lips mechanically—and all was over. At the moment he expired, the night was quite come, and terrible shouts were heard from without, of "Fire! Fire!" The conflagration had broken out in one of the workshops, filled with inflammable stuff, into which had glided the little man with the ferret's face. At the same time, the roll of drums was heard in the distance, announcing the arrival of a detachment of troops from town.

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During an hour, in spite of every effort, the fire had been spreading through the factory. The night is clear, cold, star-

light; the wind blows keenly from the north, with a moaning sound. A man walking across the fields, where the rising ground conceals the fire from him, advances with slow and unsteady steps. It is M. Hardy. He had chosen to return home on foot, across the country, hoping that a walk would calm the fever in his blood—an icy fever, more like the chill of death. He had not been deceived. His adored mistress—the noble woman, with whom he might have found refuge from the consequences of the fearful deception which had just been revealed to him—had quitted France. He could have no doubt of it. Margaret was gone to America. Her mother had exacted from her, in expiation of her fault, that she should not even write to him one word of farewell—to him, for whom she had sacrificed her duty as a wife. Margaret had obeyed.

Besides, she had often said to him: "Between my mother and you, I should not hesitate."

She had not hesitated. There was, therefore, no hope, not the slightest; even if an ocean had not separated him from Margaret, he knew enough of her blind submission to her mother to be certain that all relations between them were broken off

forever. It is well. He will no longer reckon upon this heart—his last refuge. The two roots of his life have been torn up and broken, with the same blow, the same day, almost at the same moment. What then remains for thee, poor sensitive plant, as thy tender mother used to call thee? What remains to console thee for the loss of this last love—this last friendship, so infamously crushed? Oh! there remains for thee that one corner of the earth, created after the image of thy mind—that little colony, so peaceful and flourishing, where, thanks to thee, labor brings with it joy and recompense. Those worthy artisans, whom thou hast made happy, good, and grateful, will not fail thee. That also is a great and holy affection; let it be thy shelter in the midst of this frightful wreck of all thy most sacred convictions! The calm of that cheerful and pleasant retreat, the sight of the unequaled happiness of thy dependents, will soothe thy poor, suffering soul, which now seems to live only for suffering. Come! you will soon reach the top of the hill, from which you can see afar, in the plain below, that paradise of workmen, of which you are the presiding divinity.

M. Hardy had reached the summit of

the hill. At that moment the conflagration, repressed for a short time, burst forth with redoubled fury from the Common Dwelling-house, which it had now reached. A bright streak, at first white, then red, then copper-colored, illuminated the distant horizon. M. Hardy looked at it with a sort of incredulous, almost idiotic stupor. Suddenly, an immense column of flame shot up in the thick of a cloud of smoke, accompanied by a shower of sparks, and streamed toward the sky, casting a bright reflection over all the country, even to M. Hardy's feet. The violence of the north wind, driving the flames in waves before it, soon brought to the ears of M. Hardy the hurried clanging of the alarm-bell of the burning factory.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GO-BETWEEN.

A FEW days have elapsed since the conflagration of M. Hardy's factory. The following scene takes place in the Rue Clovis, in the house where Rodin had lodged, and which was still inhabited by

Rose-Pompon, who, without the least scruple, availed herself of the household arrangements of her friend Philemon. It was about noon, and Rose-Pompon, alone in the chamber of the student, who was still absent, was breakfasting very gayly by the fireside; but how singular a breakfast! what a queer fire! how strange an apartment!

Imagine a large room, lighted by two windows without curtains—for as they looked on empty space, the lodger had no fear of being overlooked. One side of this apartment served as a wardrobe, for there was suspended Rose-Pompon's flashy costume of debardeur, not far from the boatman's jacket of Philemon, with his large trousers of coarse, gray stuff, covered with pitch (shiver my timbers), just as if this intrepid mariner had bunked in the forecastle of a frigate during a voyage round the globe. A gown of Rose-Pompon's hung gracefully over a pair of pantaloons, the legs of which seemed to come from beneath the petticoat. On the lowest of several bookshelves, very dusty and neglected, by the side of three old boots (wherefore *three* boots?) and a number of empty bottles, stood a skull, a scientific and friendly souvenir, lent to Philemon by

one of his comrades, a medical student. With a species of pleasantry, very much to the taste of the student world, a clay pipe with a very black bowl was placed between the magnificently white teeth of this skull; moreover, its shining top was half hidden beneath an old hat, set knowingly on one side, and adorned with faded flowers and ribbons. When Philemon was drunk, he used to contemplate this bony emblem of mortality, and break out into the most poetical monologues, with regard to this philosophical contrast between death and the mad pleasures of life. Two or three plaster casts, with their noses and chins more or less injured, were fastened to the wall, and bore witness to the temporary curiosity which Philemon had felt with regard to phrenological science, from the patient and serious study of which he had drawn the following logical conclusion: That having, to an alarming extent, the bump of getting into debt, he ought to resign himself to the fatality of his organization, and accept the inconvenience of creditors as a vital necessity. On the chimney-piece stood uninjured, in all its majesty, the magnificent rowing-club drinking-glass, a china teapot without a spout, and an inkstand of black wood,

the glass mouth of which was covered by a coat of greenish and mossy mould. From time to time, the silence of this retreat was interrupted by the cooing of pigeons, which Rose-Pompon had established with cordial hospitality in the little study. Chilly as a quail, Rose-Pompon crept close to the fire, and at the same time seemed to enjoy the warmth of a bright ray of sunshine, which enveloped her in its golden light. This droll little creature was dressed in the oddest costume, which, however, displayed to advantage the freshness of her piquant and pretty countenance, crowned with its fine, fair hair, always neatly combed and arranged the first thing in the morning. By way of dressing-gown, Rose-Pompon had ingeniously drawn over her linen the ample scarlet flannel shirt which belonged to Philemon's official garb in the rowing-club; the collar, open and turned down, displayed the whiteness of the young girl's under garment, as also of her neck and shoulders, on whose firm and polished surface the scarlet shirt seemed to cast a rosy light. The grisette's fresh and dimpled arms half protruded from the large, turned-up sleeves; and her charming legs were also half visible, crossed one over the other, and clothed in neat white stockings and

boots. A black silk cravat formed the girdle which fastened the shirt round the wasp-like waist of Rose-Pompon, just above those hips, worthy of the enthusiasm of a modern Phidias, and which gave to this style of dress a grace very original.

We have said that the breakfast of Rose-Pompon was singular. You shall judge. On a little table placed before her was a wash-hand-basin into which she had recently plunged her fresh face, bathing it in pure water. From the bottom of this basin, now transformed into a salad-bowl, Rose-Pompon took with the tips of her fingers large green leaves, dripping with vinegar, and crunched them between her tiny white teeth, whose enamel was too hard to allow them to be set on edge. Her drink was a glass of water and syrup of gooseberries, which she stirred with a wooden mustard-spoon. Finally, as an extra dish, she had a dozen olives in one of those blue-glass trinket-dishes sold for twenty-five sous. Her dessert was composed of nuts, which she prepared to roast on a red-hot shovel. That Rose-Pompon, with such an unaccountable savage choice of food, should retain a freshness of complexion worthy of her name, is one of those

miracles which reveal the mighty power of youth and health. When she had eaten her salad, Rose-Pompon was about to begin upon her olives, when a low knock was heard at the door, which was modestly bolted on the inside.

"Who is there?" said Rose-Pompon.

"A friend—the oldest of the old," replied a sonorous, jovial voice. "Why do you lock yourself in?"

"What! is it you, Ninny Moulin?"

"Yes, my beloved pupil. Open quickly. Time presses."

"Open to you? Oh, I daresay!—that would be pretty, the figure I am!"

"I believe you! what does it matter what figure you are? It would be very pretty, thou rosiest of all the roses with which Cupid ever adorned his quiver!"

"Go and preach fasting and morality in your journal, fat apostle!" said Rose-Pompon, as she restored the scarlet shirt to its place, with Philemon's other garments.

"I say! are we to talk much longer through the door for the greater edification of our neighbors?" cried Ninny Moulin. "I have something of importance to tell you—something that will astonish you—"

"Give me time to put on my gown, great plague that you are!"

"If it is because of my modesty, do not think of it. I am not overnice. I should like you very well as you are."

"Only to think that such a monster is the favorite of all the church-goers!" said Rose-Pompon, opening the door as she finished fastening her dress.

"So! you have at last returned to the dove-cote, you stray bird!" said Ninny Moulin, folding his arms, and looking at Rose-Pompon with comic seriousness. "And where may you have been, I pray? For three days the naughty little bird has left its nest."

"True; I only returned home last night. You must have called during my absence?"

"I came every day, and even twice a day, young lady, for I have very serious matters to communicate."

"Very serious matters? Then we shall have a good laugh at them."

"Not at all—they are really serious," said Ninny Moulin, seating himself. "But, first of all, what did you do during the three days that you left your conjugal and Philemonic home? I must know all about it before I tell you more."

"Will you have some olives?" said Rose-Pompon, as she nibbled one of them herself.

"Is that your answer?—I understand!—Unfortunate Philemon!"

"There is no unfortunate Philemon in the case, slanderer. Clara had a death in her house, and for the first few days after the funeral she was afraid to sleep alone."

"I thought Clara sufficiently provided against such fears."

"There you are deceived, you great viper! I was obliged to go and keep the poor girl company."

At this assertion, the religious pamphleteer hummed a tune, with an incredulous and mocking air.

"You think I have played Philemon tricks?" cried Rose-Pompon, cracking a nut with the indignation of injured innocence.

"I do not say tricks; but one little rose-colored trick."

"I tell you that it was not for my pleasure I went out. On the contrary—for, during my absence, poor Cephyse disappeared."

"Yes, Mother Arsene told me that the Bacchanal Queen was gone on a journey.

But when I talk of Philemon, you talk of Cephyse; we don't progress."

"May I be eaten by the black panther that they are showing at the Porte-Saint-Martin if I do not tell you the truth. And talking of that, you must get tickets to take me to see those animals, my little Ninny Moulin! They tell me there never were such darling wild beasts."

"Now really, are you mad?"

"Why so?"

"That I should guide your youth, like a venerable patriarch, through the dangers of the *Storm-blown Tulip*, all well and good—I ran no risk of meeting my pastors and masters; but were I to take you to a Lent-Spectacle (since there are only beasts to be seen) I might just run against my sacristans—and how pretty I should look with you on my arm!"

"You can put on a false nose, and straps to your trousers, my big Ninny; they will never know you."

"We must not think of false noses, but of what I have to tell you, since you assure me that you have no intrigue in hand."

"I swear it!" said Rose-Pompon solemnly, extending her left hand horizontally, while with her right she put a nut into her

mouth. Then she added, with surprise, as she looked at the outside coat of Ninny Moulin, "Goodness gracious! what full pockets you have got! What is there in them?"

"Something that concerns you, Rose-Pompon," said Dumoulin, gravely.

"Me?"

"Rose-Pompon!" said Ninny Moulin, suddenly, with a majestic air; "will you have a carriage? Will you inhabit a charming apartment, instead of living in this dreadful hole? Will you be dressed like a duchess?"

"Now for some more nonsense! Come, will you eat the olives? If not, I shall eat them all up. There is only one left."

Without answering this gastronomic offer, Ninny Moulin felt in one of his pockets, and drew from it a case containing a very pretty bracelet, which he held up sparkling before the eyes of the young girl.

"Oh! what a sumptuous bracelet!" cried she, clasping her hands. "A green-eyed serpent biting his tail—the emblem of my love for Philemon."

"Do not talk of Philemon; it annoys me," said Ninny Moulin, as he clasped the bracelet round the wrist of Rose-Pompon,

who allowed him to do it, laughing all the while like mad, and saying to him, "So you've been employed to make a purchase, big apostle, and you wish to see the effect of it. Well! it is charming!"

"Rose-Pompon," resumed Ninny Moulin, "would you like to have a servant, a box at the Opera, and a thousand francs a month for your pin-money?"

"Always the same nonsense. Get along!" said the young girl, as she held up the bracelet to the light, still continuing to eat her nuts. "Why always the same farce and no change of bills?"

Ninny Moulin again plunged his hand into his pocket, and this time drew forth an elegant chain, which he hung round Rose-Pompon's neck.

"Oh! what a beautiful chain!" cried the young girl, as she looked by turns at the sparkling ornament and the religious writer. "If you chose that also you have a very good taste. But am I not a good-natured girl to be your *dummy*, just to show off your jewels?"

"Rose-Pompon," returned Ninny Moulin, with a still more majestic air, "these trifles are nothing to what you may obtain if you will but follow the advice of your old friend."

Rose began to look at Dumoulin with surprise, and said to him, "What does all this mean, Ninny Moulin? Explain yourself; what advice have you to give?"

Dumoulin did not answer, but replunging his hand into his inexhaustible pocket, he fished up a parcel, which he carefully unfolded, and in which was a magnificent mantilla of black lace. Rose-Pompon started up, full of new admiration, and Dumoulin threw the rich mantilla over the young girl's shoulders.

"It is superb! I have never seen anything like it! What patterns! what work!" said Rose-Pompon, as she examined all with simple and perfectly disinterested curiosity. Then she added, "Your pocket is like a shop; where did you get all these pretty things?" Then, bursting into a fit of laughter, which brought the blood to her cheeks, she exclaimed: "Oh, I have it! These are the wedding-presents for Madame de la Sainte-Colombe. I congratulate you; they are very choice."

"And where do you suppose I should find money to buy these wonders?" said Ninny Moulin. "I repeat to you, all this is yours if you will but listen to me!"

"How is this?" said Rose-Pompon, with

the utmost amazement; "is what you tell me in downright earnest?"

"In downright earnest."

"This offer to make me a great lady?"

"The jewels might convince you of the reality of my offers."

"And you propose all this to me for some one else, my poor Ninny Moulin?"

"One moment," said the religious writer, with a comical air of modesty; "you must know me well enough, my beloved pupil, to fell certain that I should be incapable of inducing you to commit an improper action. I respect myself too much for that —leaving out the consideration that it would be unfair to Philemon, who confided to me the guardianship of your virtue."

"Then, Ninny Moulin," said Rose-Pompon, more and more astonished, "on my word of honor, I can make nothing of it."

"Yet, 'tis all very simple, and I—"

"Oh! I've found it," cried Rose-Pompon, interrupting Ninny Molin; "it is some gentleman who offers me his hand, his heart, and all the rest of it. Could you not tell me that directly?"

"A marriage? oh, laws, yes!" said Dumoulin, shrugging his shoulders.

"What! is it not a marriage?" said Rose-Pompon, again much surprised.

"No."

"And the offers you make me are honest ones, my big apostle?"

"They could not be more so." Here Dumoulin spoke the truth.

"I shall not have to be unfaithful to Philemon?"

"No."

"Or faithful to any one else?"

"No."

Rose-Pompon looked confounded. Then she rattled on: "Come, do not let us have any joking! I am not foolish enough to imagine that I am to live just like a duchess, just for nothing. What, therefore, must I give in return?"

"Nothing at all."

"Nothing?"

"Not even that," said Ninny Moulin, biting his nail-tip.

"But what am I to do, then?"

"Dress yourself as handsomely as possible, take your ease, amuse yourself, ride about in a carriage. You see, it is not very fatiguing, and you will, moreover, help to do a good action."

"What! by living like a duchess?"

"Yes, so make up your mind. Do not

ask me for any more details, for I cannot give them to you. For the rest, you will not be detained against your will. Just try the life I propose to you. If it suits you, go on with it; if not, return to your Philemonic household."

"In fact—"

"Only try it. What can you risk?"

"Nothing; but I can hardly believe that all you say is true. And then," added she, with hesitation, "I do not know if I ought—"

Ninny Moulin went to the window, opened it, and said to Rose-Pompon, who ran up to it, "Look there! before the door of the house."

"What a pretty carriage! How comfortable a body'd be inside of it!"

"That carriage is yours. It is waiting for you."

"Waiting for me!" exclaimed Rose-Pompon; "am I to decide as short as that?"

"Or not at all."

"To-day?"

"On the instant."

"But where will they take me?"

"How should I know?"

"You do not know where they will take me?"

"Not I"—and Dumoulin still spoke the truth—"the coachman has his orders."

"Do you know all this is very funny, Ninny Moulin?"

"I believe you. If it were not funny, where would be the pleasure?"

"You are right."

"Then you accept the offer? That is well. I am delighted both for you and myself."

"For yourself?"

"Yes; because, in accepting, you render me a great service."

"You? How so?"

"It matters little, as long as I feel obliged to you."

"True."

"Come, then; let us set out!"

"Bah! after all, they cannot eat me," said Rose-Pompon, resolutely.

With a skip and a jump, she went to fetch a rose-colored cap, and, going up to a broken looking-glass, placed the cap very much cocked on one side on her bands of light hair. This left uncovered her snowy neck, with the silky roots of the hair behind, and gave to her pretty face a very mischievous, not to say licentious expression.

"My cloak!" said she to Ninny Moulin,

who seemed to be relieved from a considerable amount of uneasiness, since she had accepted his offer.

"Fie! a cloak will not do," answered her companion, feeling once more in his pocket, and drawing out a fine cashmere shawl, which he threw over Rose-Pompon's shoulders.

"A cashmere!" cried the young girl, trembling with pleasure and joyous surprise. Then she added, with an air of heroism: "It is settled! I will run the gauntlet." And with a light step she descended the stairs, followed by Ninny Moulin.

The worthy green-grocer was at her post. "Good-morning, mademoiselle; you are early to-day," said she to the young girl.

"Yes, Mother Arsene; there is my key."

"Thank you, mademoiselle."

"Oh! now I think of it," said Rose-Pompon, suddenly, in a whisper, as she turned toward Ninny Moulin, and withdrew further from the portress, "what is to become of Philemon?"

"Philemon?"

"If he should arrive—"

"Oh! the devil!" said Ninny Moulin, scratching his ear.

"Yes; if Philemon should arrive, what will they say to him? for I may be a long time absent."

"Three or four months, I suppose."

"Not more?"

"I should think not."

"Oh! very good!" said Rose-Pompon. Then, turning toward the green-grocer, she said to her, after a moment's reflection: "Mother Arsene, if Philemon should come home, you will tell him I have gone out—on business."

"Yes, mademoiselle"

"And that he must not forget to feed my pigeons, which are in his study.'

"Yes, mademoiselle."

"Good-by, Mother Arsene."

"Good-by, mademoiselle." And Rose-Pompon entered the carriage in triumph, along with Ninny Moulin.

"The devil take me if I know what is to come of all this," said Jacques Dumoulin to himself, as the carriage drove rapidly down the Rue Clovis. "I have repaired my error—and now I laugh at the rest."

CHAPTER VII.

ANOTHER SECRET.

THE following scene took place a few days after the abduction of Rose-Pompon by Ninny Moulin. Mdlle. de Cardoville was seated, in a dreamy mood, in her cabinet, which was hung with green silk, and furnished with an ebony library, ornamented with large bronze caryatides. By some significant signs, one could perceive that Mdlle. de Cardoville had sought in the fine airs some relief from sad and serious thoughts. Near an open piano was a harp placed before a music-stand. A little further, on a table covered with boxes of oil and water-color, were several brilliant sketches. Most of them represented Asiatic scenes, lighted by the fires of an Oriental sun. Faithful to her fancy of dressing herself at home in a picturesque style, Mademoiselle de Cardoville resembled that day one of those proud portraits of Velasquez, with stern and noble aspect. Her gown was of black moire, with wide-

swelling petticoat, long waist, and sleeve slashed with rose-colored satin, fastened together with jet bugles. A very stiff Spanish ruff reached almost to her chin, and was secured round her neck by a broad rose-colored ribbon. This frill, slightly heaving, sloped down as far as the graceful swell of the rose-colored stomacher, laced with strings of jet beads, and terminating in a point at the waist. It is impossible to express how well this black garment with its ample and shining folds, relieved with rose-color and brilliant jet, harmonized with the shining whiteness of Adrienne's skin and the golden flood of her beautiful hair, whose long, silky ringlets descended to her bosom.

The young lady was in a half-recumbent posture, with her elbow resting on a couch covered with green silk. The back of this piece of furniture, which was pretty high toward the fireplace, sloped down insensibly toward the foot. A sort of light, semicircular trellis-work, in gilded bronze, raised about five feet from the ground, covered with flowering plants (the admirable passiflores quadrangulatæ, planted in a deep ebony box from the center of which rose the trellis-work), surrounded this couch with a sort of screen of foliage, enameled

with large flowers, green without, purple within, and as brilliant as those flowers of porcelain which we receive from Saxony. A sweet, faint perfume, like a faint mixture of jasmine with violet, rose from the cup of these admirable passiflores. Strange enough, a large quantity of new books (Adrienne having bought them since the last two or three days), and quite fresh-cut, were scattered around her on the couch, and on a little table; while other larger volumes, among which were several atlases full of engravings, were piled on the sumptuous fur which formed the carpet beneath the divan. Stranger still, these books, though of different forms, and by different authors, all treated of the same subject. The posture of Adrienne revealed a sort of melancholy dejection. Her cheeks were pale; a light blue circle surrounded her large, black eyes, now half-closed, and gave to them an expression of profound grief. Many causes contributed to this sorrow—among others, the disappearance of Mother Bunch. Without absolutely believing the perfidious insinuations of Rodin, who gave her to understand that, in the fear of being unmasked by him, the hunchback had not dared to remain in the house, Adrienne felt a cruel sinking of the heart

when she thought how this young girl, in whom she had had so much confidence, had fled from her almost sisterly hospitality without even uttering a word of gratitude; for care had been taken not to show her the few lines written by the poor needlewoman to her benefactress, just before her departure. She had only been told of the note for five hundred francs found on her desk; and this last inexplicable circumstance had contributed to awaken cruel suspicions in the breast of Mdlle. de Cardoville. She already felt the fatal effects of that mistrust of everything and everybody which Rodin had recommended to her; and this sentiment of suspicion and reserve had the more tendency to become powerful that, for the first time in her life, Mdlle. de Cardoville, until then a stranger to all deception, had a secret to conceal—a secret, which was equally her happiness, her shame, and her torment.

Half-recumbent on her divan, pensive and depressed, Adrienne pursued, with a mind often absent, one of her newly purchased books. Suddenly, she uttered an exclamation of surprise; the hand which held the book trembled like a leaf, and from that moment she appeared to read with passionate attention and devouring

curiosity. Soon, her eyes sparkled with enthusiasm, her smile assumed ineffable sweetness, and she seemed at once proud, happy, delighted—but, as she turned over the last page, her countenance expressed disappointment and chagrin. Then she recommenced this reading, which had occasioned her such sweet emotion, and this time she read with the most deliberate slowness, going over each page twice, and spelling, as it were every line, every word. From time to time she paused, and in a pensive mood, with her forehead leaning on her fair hand, she seemed to reflect, in a deep reverie, on the passages she had read with such tender and religious love. Arriving at a passage which so affected her that a tear started in her eye, she suddenly turned the volume, to see on the cover the name of the author. For a few seconds she contemplated this name with a singular expression of gratitude, and could not forbear raising to her rosy lips the page on which it was printed. After reading many times over the lines with which she had been so much struck, forgetting, no doubt, the letter in the spirit, she began to reflect so deeply that the book glided from her hand and fell upon the carpet. During the course of this reverie, the eyes of

the young girl rested, at first mechanically, upon an admirable bass-relief, placed on an ebony stand near one of the windows. This magnificent bronze, recently cast after a plaster copy from the antique, represented the triumph of the Indian Bacchus. Never, perhaps, had Grecian art attained such rare perfection. The youthful conqueror, half-clad in a lion's skin, which displayed his juvenile grace and charming purity of form, shone with divine beauty. Standing up in a car, drawn by two tigers, with an air at once gentle and proud, he leaned with one hand upon a thyrsus and with the other guided his savage steeds in tranquil majesty. By this rare mixture of grace, vigor, and serenity, it was easy to recognize the hero who had waged such desperate combats with men and with monsters of the forest. Thanks to the brownish tone of the figure the light, falling from one side of the sculpture, admirably displayed the form of the youthful god, which, carved in relievo, and thus illumined, shone like a magnificent statue of pale gold upon the dark fretted background of the bronze.

When Adrienne's look first rested on this rare assemblage of divine perfections, her countenance was calm and thoughtful. But this contemplation, at first mechanical,

became gradually more and more attentive and conscious, and the young lady, rising suddenly from her seat, slowly approached the bass-relief, as if yielding to the invincible attraction of an extraordinary resemblance. Then a slight blush appeared on the cheeks of Mdlle. de Cardoville, stole across her face, and spread rapidly to her neck and forehead. She approached still closer, threw round a hasty glance, as if half-ashamed, or as if she had feared to be surprised in a blamable action, and twice stretched forth her hand, trembling with emotion, to touch with the tips of her charming fingers the bronze forehead of the Indian Bacchus. And twice she stopped short, with a kind of modest hesitation. At last, the temptation became too strong for her. She yielded to it; and her alabaster finger, after delicately caressing the features of pale gold, was pressed more boldly for an instant on the pure and noble brow of the youthful god. At this pressure, though so slight, Adrienne seemed to feel a sort of electric shock; she trembled in every limb, her eyes languished, and, after swimming for an instant in their humid and brilliant crystal, were raised, half-closed, to heaven. Then her head was thrown a little way back, her knees bent

insensibly, her rosy lips were half-opened, as if to give a passage to her heated breath, for her bosom heaved violently, as though youth and life had accelerated the pulsations of her heart, and made her blood boil in her veins. Finally, the burning cheeks of Adrienne betrayed a species of ecstasy, timid and passionate, chaste and sensual, the expression of which was ineffably touching.

An affecting spectacle indeed is that of a young maiden, whose modest brow flushes with the first fires of a secret passion. Does not the Creator of all things animate the body as well as the soul with a spark of divine energy? Should He not be religiously glorified in the intellect as in the senses with which He has so paternally endowed His creatures? They are impious blasphemers who seek to stifle the celestial senses, instead of guiding and harmonizing them in their divine flight. Suddenly, Mdlle. de Cardoville started, raised her head, opened her eyes as if waking from a dream, withdrew abruptly from the sculptures, and walked several times up and down the room in an agitated manner, pressing her burning hands to her forehead. Then, falling, as it were, exhausted on her seat, her tears flowed in abundance.

The most bitter grief was visible in her features, which revealed the fatal struggle that was passing within her. By degrees, her tears ceased. To this crisis of painful dejection succeeded a species of violent scorn and indignation against herself, which was expressed by these words that escaped her: "For the first time in my life, I feel weak and cowardly. Oh, yes! cowardly—very cowardly!"

The sound of a door, opening and closing, roused Mdlle. de Cardoville from her bitter reflections. Georgette entered the room, and said to her mistress: "Madame, can you receive the Count de Montbron?"

Adrienne, too well-bred to exhibit before her women the sort of impatience occasioned by this unseasonable visit, said to Georgette: "You told M. de Montbron that I was at home?"

"Yes, madame."

"Then beg him to walk in." Though Mdlle. de Cardoville felt that moment much vexed at the arrival of Montbron, let us hasten to say that she entertained for him an almost filial affection, and a profound esteem, though, by a not infrequent contrast, she almost always differed from him in opinion. Hence arose, when Mdlle. de Cardoville had nothing to disturb

her mind, the most gay and animated discussions, in which M. de Montbron, notwithstanding his mocking and skeptical humor, his long experience, his rare knowledge of men and things, his fashionable training, in a word, had not always the advantage, and even acknowledged his defeat gayly enough. Thus, to give an idea of the differences of the count and Adrienne, before, as he would say, laughingly, he had made himself her accomplice, he had always opposed (from other motives than those alleged by Madame de Saint-Dizier) Adrienne's wish to live alone and in her own way; while Rodin, on the contrary, by investing the young girl's resolve on this subject with an ideal grandeur of intention had acquired a species of influence over her. M. de Montbron, now upward of sixty years of age, had been a most prominent character during the Directory, Consulate, and the Empire. His prodigal style of living, his wit, his gayety, his duels, his amours, and his losses at play had given him a leading influence in the best society of his day; while his character, his kind-heartedness and liberality, secured him the lasting friendship of nearly all his female friends. At the time we now present him to the reader he was still a great

gambler; and moreover a very lucky gambler. He had, as we have stated, a very lordly style; his manners were decided, but polished and lively; his habits were such as belong to the higher classes of society, though he could be excessively sharp toward people whom he did not like. He was tall and thin, and his slim figure gave him an almost youthful appearance; his forehead was high and a little bald; his hair was gray and short, his countenance long, his nose aquiline, his eyes blue and piercing, and his teeth white and still very good.

"The Count de Montbron," said Georgette, opening the door. The count entered and hastened to kiss Adrienne's hand with a sort of paternal familiarity.

"Come!" said M. de Montbron to himself; "let us try to discover the truth I am in search of, that we may escape a great misfortune."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFESSION.

MDLLE. DE CARDOVILLE, not wishing to betray the cause of the violent feelings

which agitated her, received M. de Montbron with a feigned and forced gayety. On the other hand, notwithstanding his tact and knowledge of the world, the count was much embarrassed how to enter upon the subject on which he wished to confer with Adrienne, and he resolved to feel his way before seriously commencing the conversation. After looking at the young lady for some seconds, M. de Montbron shook his head, and said, with a sigh of regret: "My dear child, I am not pleased."

"Some affair of the heart, or of *hearts*, my dear count?" returned Adrienne, smiling.

"Of the heart," said M. de Montbron.

"What! you so great a player, think more of a woman's whim than a throw of the dice?"

"I have a heavy heart, and you are the cause of it, my dear child."

"M. de Montbron, you will make me very proud," said Adrienne, with a smile.

"You would be wrong, for I tell you plainly, my trouble is caused by your neglect of your beauty. Yes, your countenance is pale, dejected, sorrowful; you have been low-spirited for the last few days; you have something on your mind, I am sure of it."

'My dear M. de Montbron, you have so much penetration that you may be allowed to fail for once, as now. I am not sad, I have nothing on my mind, and—I am about to utter a very silly piece of impertinence—I have never thought myself so pretty."

"On the contrary, nothing could be more modest than such an assertion. Who told you that falsehood? a woman?"

"No; it was my heart, and it spoke the truth," answered Adrienne, with a slight degree of emotion. "Understand it, if you can," she added.

"Do you mean that you are proud of the alteration in your features, because you are proud of the sufferings of your heart?" said M. de Montbron, looking at Adrienne with attention. "Be it so; I am then right. You have some sorrow. I persist in it," added the count, speaking with a tone of real feeling, "because it is painful to me."

"Be satisfied; I am as happy as possible —for every instant I take delight in repeating, how, at my age, I am free—absolutely free!"

"Yes; free to torment yourself, free to be miserable."

'Come, come, my dear count!" said

Adrienne, "you are recommencing our old quarrel. I still find in you the ally of my aunt and the Abbe d'Aigrigny."

"Yes; as the republicans are the allies of the legitimists—to destroy each other in their turn. Talking of your abominable aunt, they say that she holds a sort of council at her house these last few days, a regular mitered conspiracy. She is certainly in a good way."

"Why not? Formerly, she would have wished to be Goddess of Reason; now, we shall perhaps see her canonized. She has already performed the first part of the life of Mary Magdalen."

"You can never speak worse of her than she deserves, my dear child. Still, though for quite opposite reasons, I agreed with her on the subject of your wish to reside alone."

"I know it."

"Yes; and because I wished to see you a thousand times freer than you really are, I advised you—"

"To marry."

"No doubt; you would have had your dear liberty, with its consequences, only, instead of Mdlle. de Cardoville, we should have called you Madame Somebody, having found an excellent hus-

band to be responsible for your independence."

"And who would have been responsible for this ridiculous husband? And who would bear a mocked and degraded name? I, perhaps?" said Adrienne, with animation. "No, no, my dear count, good or ill, I will answer for my own actions; to my name shall attach the reputation which I alone have formed. I am as incapable of basely dishonoring a name which is not mine as of continually bearing it myself, if it were not held in esteem. And, as one can only answer for one's own actions, I prefer to keep my name."

"You are the only person in the world that has such ideas."

"Why?" said Adrienne, laughing. "Because it appears to me horrible to see a poor young girl lost and buried in some ugly and selfish man, and become, as they say seriously, the better half of the monster—yes! a fresh and blooming rose to become part of a frightful thistle! Come, my dear count; confess there is something odious in this conjugal metempsychosis," added Adrienne, with a burst of laughter.

The forced and somewhat feverish gayety of Adrienne contrasted painfully with her pale and suffering countenance; it was

so easy to see that she strove to stifle with laughter some deep sorrow, that M. de Montbron was much affected by it; but, dissembling his emotion, he appeared to reflect a moment, and took up mechanically one of the new, fresh-cut books, by which Adrienne was surrounded. After casting a careless glance at this volume, he continued, still dissembling his feelings: "Come, my dear madcap, this is another folly. Suppose I were twenty years old, and that you did me the honor to marry me—you would be called Lady de Montbron, I imagine?"

"Perhaps."

"How perhaps? Would you not bear my name if you married me?"

"My dear count," said Adrienne, with a smile, "do not let us pursue this hypothesis, which can only leave us—regrets."

Suddenly, M. de Montbron started, and looked at Mdlle. de Cardoville with an expression of surprise. For some moments, while talking to Adrienne, he had mechanically taken up two or three of the volumes scattered over the couch, and glanced at their titles in the same careless manner. The first was the "Modern History of India." The second, "Travels in India." The third, "Letters on India." Much sur-

prised, M. de Montbron had continued his investigation, and found that the fourth volume continued this Indian nomenclature, being "Rambles in India." The fifth was, "Recollections of Hindostan." The sixth, "Notes of a Traveler in the East Indies."

Hence the astonishment which, for many serious reasons, M. de Montbron had no longer been able to conceal, and which his looks betrayed to Adrienne. The latter, having completely forgotten the presence of the accusing volumes by which she was surrounded, yielded to a movement of involuntary confusion, and blushed slightly; but, her firm and resolute character again coming to her aid, she looked full at M. de Montbron, and said to him: "Well, my dear count! what surprises you?"

Instead of answering, M. de Montbron appeared still more absorbed in thought, and contemplating the young girl, he could not forbear saying to himself: "No, no—it is impossible—and yet—"

"It would, perhaps, be indiscreet in me to listen to your soliloquy, my dear count," said Adrienne.

"Excuse me, my dear child; but what I see surprises me so much—"

"And pray what do you see?"

"The traces of so great and novel an interest in all that relates to India," said M. de Montbron, laying a slight stress on his words, and fixing a piercing look upon the young girl.

"Well!" said Adrienne, stoutly.

"Well! I seek the cause of this sudden passion—"

"Geographical?" said Mdlle. de Cardoville, interrupting M. de Montbron; "you may find this taste somewhat serious for my age, my dear count—but one must find occupation for leisure hours—and then, having a cousin, who is both an Indian and a prince, I should like to know something of the fortunate country from which I derive this savage relationship."

These last words were pronounced with a bitterness that was not lost on M. de Montbron: watching Adrienne attentively, he observed: "Meseems, you speak of the prince with some harshness."

"No; I speak of him with indifference."

"Yet he deserves a very different feeling."

"On the part of some other person, perhaps," replied Adrienne, dryly.

"He is so unhappy!" said M. de Montbron, in a tone of sincere pity. "When I

saw him the other day, he made my heart ache."

"What have I to do with it?" exclaimed Adrienne, with an accent of painful and almost angry impatience.

"I should have thought that his cruel torments at least deserved your pity," answered the count, gravely.

"Pity—from me!" cried Adrienne, with an air of offended pride. Then, restraining herself, she added coldly: "You are jesting, M. de Montbron. It is not in sober seriousness that you ask me to take interest in the amorous torments of your prince."

There was so much cold disdain in these last words of Adrienne, her pale and agitated countenance betrayed such haughty bitterness, that M. de Montbron said, sorrowfully: "It is then true; I have not been deceived. I, who thought, from our old and constant friendship, that I had some claim to your confidence, have known nothing of it—while you told all to another. It is painful, very painful to me."

"I do not understand you, M. de Montbron."

"Well then, since I must speak plainly," cried the count, "there is, I see, no hope for this unhappy boy—you love another."

As Adrienne started—"Oh! you cannot deny it," resumed the count; "your paleness and melancholy for the last few days, your implacable indifference to the prince—all prove to me that you are in love."

Hurt by the manner in which the count spoke of the sentiment he attributed to her, Mdlle. de Cardoville answered with dignified stateliness: "You must know, M. de Montbron, that a secret discovered is not a confidence. Your language surprises me."

"Oh, my dear friend, if I use the poor privilege of experience—if I guess that you are in love—if I tell you so, and even go so far as to reproach you with it—it is because the life or death of this poor prince is concerned; and I feel for him as if he were my son, for it is impossible to know him without taking the warmest interest in him."

"It would be singular," returned Adrienne, with redoubled coldness, and still more bitter irony, "if my love—admitting I were in love—could have any such strange influence on Prince Djalma. What can it matter to him?" added she, with almost agonizing disdain.

"What can it matter to him? Now really, my dear friend, permit me to tell

you, that it is you who are jesting cruelly. What! this unfortunate youth loves you with all the blind ardor of a first love—twice has attempted to terminate by suicide the horrible tortures of his passion—and you think it strange that your love for another should be with him a question of life or death!"

"He loves me, then?" cried the young girl, with an accent impossible to describe.

"He loves you to madness, I tell you; I have seen it."

Adrienne seemed overcome with amazement. From pale, she became crimson; as the redness disappeared, her lips grew white, and trembled. Her emotion was so strong that she remained for some moments unable to speak, and pressed her hand to her heart, as if to moderate its pulsations.

M. de Montbron, almost frightened at the sudden change in Adrienne's countenance, hastily approached her, exclaiming: "Good Heaven, my poor child! what is the matter?"

Instead of answering, Adrienne waved her hand to him, in sign that he should not be alarmed; and, in fact, the count was speedily tranquilized, for the beautiful face, which had so lately been contracted

with pain, irony, and scorn, seemed now expressive of the sweetest and most ineffable emotions; Adrienne appeared to luxuriate in delight, and to fear losing the least particle of it; then, as reflection told her that she was, perhaps, the dupe of illusion or falsehood, she exclaimed suddenly, with anguish, addressing herself to M. de Montbron: "But is what you tell me true?"

"What I tell you!"

"Yes—that Prince Djalma—"

"Loves you to madness? Alas! it is only too true."

"No, no," cried Adrienne, with a charming expression of simplicity; "that could never be *too* true."

"What do you say?" cried the count.

"But that woman?" asked Adrienne, as if the words scorched her lips.

"What woman?"

"She who has been the cause of all these painful struggles."

"That woman!—why, who should it be but you?"

"What, I? Oh! tell me, was it I?"

"On my word of honor. I trust my experience. I have never seen so ardent and sincere a passion."

"Oh! is it really so? Has he never had any other love?"

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—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4, p. 265.

"Never."

"Yet I was told so."

"By whom?"

"M. Rodin."

"That Djalma—"

"Had fallen violently in love two days after I saw him."

"M. Rodin told you that!" cried M. de Montbron, as if struck with a sudden idea. "Why, it is he who told Djalma that you were in love with some one else."

"I!"

"And this it was which occasioned the poor youth's dreadful despair."

"It was this which occasioned *my* despair."

"You love him, then, just as he loves you!" exclaimed M. de Montbron, transported with joy.

"Love him!" said Mdlle. de Cardoville. A discreet knock at the door interrupted Adrienne.

"One of your servants, no doubt. Be calm," said the count.

"Come in," said Adrienne, in an agitated voice.

"What is it?" said Mdlle. de Cardoville. Florine entered the room.

"M. Rodin has just been. Fearing to disturb mademoiselle, he would not come

in; but he will return in half an hour. Will mademoiselle receive him?"

"Yes, yes," said the count to Florine; "even if I am still here, show him in by all means. Is not that your opinion?" asked M. de Montbron of Adrienne.

"Quite so," answered the young girl; and a flash of indignation darted from her eyes, as she thought of Rodin's perfidy.

"Oho! the old knave!" said M. de Montbron, "I always had my doubts of that crooked neck!" Florine withdrew, leaving the count with her mistress.

CHAPTER IX.

LOVE.

MDLLE. DE CARDOVILLE was transfigured. For the first time her beauty shone forth in all its luster. Until now overshadowed by indifference, or darkened by grief, she appeared suddenly illumined by a brilliant ray of sunshine. The slight irritation caused by Rodin's perfidy passed like an imperceptible shadow from her brow. What cared she now for falsehood and perfidy? Had they not failed? And, for the future, what human power could

interpose between her and Djalma, so sure of each other? Who would dare to cross the path of those two beings, resolute and strong with the irresistible power of youth, love, and liberty? Who would dare to follow them into that blazing sphere, whither they went, so beautiful and happy, to blend together in their inextinguishable love, protected by the proof-armor of their own happiness? Hardly had Florine left the room, when Adrienne approached M. de Montbron with a rapid step. She seemed to have become taller; and to watch her advancing, light, radiant, and triumphant, one might have fancied her a goddess walking upon the clouds.

"When shall I see him?" was her first word to M. de Montbron.

"Well, say to-morrow; he must be prepared for so much happiness; in so ardent a nature, such sudden, unexpected joy might be terrible."

Adrienne remained pensive for a moment, and then said rapidly: "To-morrow; yes—not before to-morrow. I have a superstition of the heart."

"What is it?"

"You shall know. HE LOVES ME—that word says all, contains all, comprehends all, is all—and yet I have a thousand ques-

tions to ask with regard to him—but I will ask none before to-morrow, because, by a mysterious fatality, to-morrow is with me a sacred anniversary. It will be an age till then; but, happily, I can wait. Look here!"

Beckoning M. de Montbron, she led him to the Indian Bacchus. "How much it is like him!" said she to the count.

"Indeed," exclaimed the latter, "it is strange!"

"Strange?" returned Adrienne, with a smile of gentle pride; "strange, that a hero, a demi-god, an ideal of beauty, should resemble Djalma?"

"How you love him!" said M. de Montbron, deeply touched, and almost dazzled by the felicity which beamed from the countenance of Adrienne.

"I must have suffered a good deal, do you not think so?" said she, after a moment's silence.

"If I had not made up my mind to come here to-day, almost in despair, what would have happened?"

"I cannot tell; I should perhaps have died, for I am wounded mortally here"—she pressed her hand to her heart. "But what might have been death to me will now be life."

"It was horrible," said the count, shuddering. "Such a passion, buried in your own breast, proud as you are—"

"Yes, proud — but not self-conceited. When I learned his love for another, and that the impression which I fancied I had made on him at our first interview had been immediately effaced, I renounced all hope, without being able to renounce my love. Instead of shunning his image, I surrounded myself with all that could remind me of him. In default of happiness, there is a bitter pleasure in suffering through what we love."

"I can now understand your Indian library."

Instead of answering the count, Adrienne took from the stand one of the freshly cut volumes, and, bringing it to M. de Montbron, said to him, with a smile and a celestial expression of joy and happiness: "I was wrong—I am vain. Just read this —aloud, if you please. I tell you that I can wait for to-morrow." Presenting the book to the count, she pointed out one passage with the tip of her charming finger. Then she sunk down upon the couch, and, in an attitude of deep attention, with her body bent forward, her hands crossed upon the cushion, her chin resting upon

her hands, her large eyes fixed with a sort of adoration on the Indian Bacchus, that was just opposite to her, she appeared by this impassioned contemplation to prepare herself to listen to M. de Montbron.

The latter, much astonished, began to read, after again looking at Adrienne, who said to him, in her most coaxing voice:

"Very slowly, I beg of you."

M. de Montbron then read the following passage from the journal of a traveler in India: " 'When I was at Bombay, in 1829, I constantly heard, among the English there, of a young hero, the son of—' "

The count having paused a second, by reason of the barbarous spelling of the name of Djalma's father, Adrienne immediately said to him, in her soft voice: "The son of Kadja-sing."

"What a memory!" said the count, with a smile. And he resumed: " 'A young hero, the son of Kadja-sing, king of Mundi. On his return from a distant and sanguinary expedition among the mountains against this Indian king, Colonel Drake was filled with enthusiasm for this son of Kadja-sing, known as Djalma. Hardly beyond the age of childhood, this young prince has, in the course of this implacable

war, given proofs of such chivalrous intrepidity, and of so noble a character, that his father has been surnamed the Father of the Generous.' "

"That is a touching custom," said the count. "To recompense the father, as it were, by giving him a surname in honor of his son, is a great idea. But how strange you should have met with this book!" added the count in surprise. "I can't understand; there is matter here to inflame the coolest head."

"Oh! you will see, you will see," said Adrienne.

The count continued to read: " 'Colonel Drake, one of the bravest and best officers of the English army, said yesterday, in my presence, that, having been dangerously wounded, and taken prisoner by Prince Djalma, after an energetic resistance, he had been conveyed to the camp established in the village of—' "

Here there was the same hesitation on the part of the count, on seeing a still more barbarous name than the first; so, not wishing to try the adventure, he paused, and said to Adrienne, "Now, really, I give this up."

"And yet it is so easy!" replied Adrienne; and she pronounced with inexpres-

sible softness, a name in itself soft, "The village of Shumshabad."

"You appear to have an infallible process for remembering geographical names," said the count, continuing· "'Once arrived at the camp, Colonel Drake received the kindest hospitality, and Prince Djalma treated him with the respect of a son. It was there that the colonel became acquainted with some facts, which carried to the highest pitch his enthusiasm for Prince Djalma. I heard him relate the two following:

"'In one of the battles, the prince was accompanied by a young Indian of about twelve years of age, whom he loved tenderly, and who served him as a page, following him on horseback to carry his spare weapons. This child was idolized by its mother; just as they set out on the expedition, she had intrusted her son to Prince Djalma's care, saying, with a stoicism worthy of antiquity, "Let him be your brother." "He shall be my brother," had replied the prince. In the height of a disastrous defeat, the child is severely wounded, and his horse killed; the prince, at peril of his life, notwithstanding the precipitation of a forced retreat, disengages him, and places him on the croup of his

own horse; they are pursued; a musket-ball strikes their steed, who is just able to reach a jungle, in the midst of which, after some vain efforts, he falls exhausted. The child is unable to walk, but the prince carries him in his arms, and hides with him in the thickest part of the jungle. The English arrive, and begin their search; but the two victims escape. After a night and a day of marches, counter-marches, stratagems, fatigues, unheard-of perils, the prince, still carrying the child, one of whose legs is broken, arrives at his father's camp, and says, with the utmost simplicity, "I had promised his mother that I would act a brother's part by him—and I have done so." '

"That is admirable!" cried the count.

"Go on—pray go on!" said Adrienne, drying a tear, without removing her eyes from the bass relief, which she continued to contemplate with growing adoration.

The count continued: " 'Another time, Prince Djalma, followed by two black slaves, went, before sunrise, to a very wild spot, to seize a couple of tiger cubs only a few days old. The den had been previously discovered. The two old tigers were still abroad. One of the blacks entered the den by a narrow aperture; the

other, aided by Djalma, cut down a tolerably large tree, to prepare a trap for one of the old tigers. On the side of the aperture, the cavern was exceedingly steep. The prince mounted to the top of it with agility, to set his trap, with the aid of the other black. Suddenly, a dreadful roar was heard; and, in a few bounds, the tigress, returning from the chase, reached the opening of the den. The black who was laying the trap with the prince had his skull fractured by her bite; the tree, falling across the entrance, prevented the female from penetrating the cavern, and at the same time stopped the exit of the black who had seized the cubs.

"'About twenty feet higher, upon a ledge of rock, the prince lay flat on the ground, looking down upon this frightful spectacle. The tigress, rendered furious by the cries of her little ones, gnawed the hands of the black, who, from the interior of the den, strove to support the trunk of the tree, his only rampart, while he uttered the most lamentable outcries.'

"It is horrible!" said the count.

"Oh! go on! pray go on!" exclaimed Adrienne, with excitement; "you will see what can be achieved by the heroism of goodness."

The count pursued: "'Suddenly the prince seized his dagger between his teeth, fastened his sash to a block of stone, took his ax in one hand, and with the other slid down this substitute for a rope; falling a few steps from the wild beast, he sprung upon her, and, swift as lightning, dealt her two mortal strokes, just as the black, losing his strength, was about to drop the trunk of the tree, sure to have been torn to pieces.'"

"And you are astonished at his resemblance to the demi-god, to whom fable itself ascribes no more generous devotion!" cried the young lady, with still increasing excitement.

"I am astonished no longer, I only admire," said the count, in a voice of emotion; "and, at these two noble instances of heroism, my heart beats with enthusiasm, as if I were still twenty."

"And the noble heart of this traveler beat like yours at the recital," said Adrienne; "you will see."

"'What renders so admirable the intrepidity of the prince is, that, according to the principle of Indian castes, the life of a slave is of no importance; thus a king's son, risking his life for the safety of a poor creature, so generally despised, obeyed an

heroic and truly Christian instinct of charity, until then unheard of in this country.

"'"Two such actions," said Col. Drake with good reason, "are sufficient to paint the man;" it is with a feeling of profound respect and admiration, therefore, that I, an obscure traveler, have written the name of Prince Djalma in my book; and at the same time, I have experienced a kind of sorrow when I have asked myself what would be the future fate of this prince, buried in the depths of a savage country, always devastated by war. However humble may be the homage that I pay to this character, worthy of the heroic age, his name will at least be repeated with generous enthusiasm by all those who have hearts that beat in sympathy with what is great and noble.'"

"And just now, when I read those simple and touching lines," resumed Adrienne, "I could not forbear pressing my lips to the name of the traveler."

"Yes; he is such as I thought him," cried the count, with still more emotion, as he returned the book to Adrienne, who rose, with a grave and touching air, and said to him: "It was thus I wished you to know him, that you might understand my

adoration; for this courage, this heroic goodness, I had guessed beforehand, when I was an involuntary listener to his conversation. From that moment, I knew him to be generous as intrepid, tender and sensitive as energetic and resolute; and when I saw him so marvelously beuatiful —so different, in the noble character of his countenance, and even in the style of his garments, from all I had hitherto met with —when I saw the impression that I made upon him, and which I perhaps felt still more violently—I knew that my whole life was bound up with his love."

"And now, what are your plans?"

"Divine, radiant as my heart. When he learns his happiness, I wish that Djalma should feel dazzled as I do, so as to prevent my gazing on my sun; for I repeat that until to-morrow will be a century to me. Yes, it is strange! I should have thought that after such a discovery I should feel the want of being left alone, plunged in an ocean of delicious dreams. But no! from this time till to-morrow—I dread solitude —I feel a kind of feverish impatience— uneasy, ardent— Oh! where is the beneficent fairy that, touching me with her wand, will lull me into slumber till to-morrow?"

"I will be that beneficent fairy," said the count, smiling.

"You?"

"Yes, I."

"And how so?"

"The power of my wand is this: I will relieve you from a portion of your thoughts by making them materially visible."

"Pray explain yourself."

"And my plan will have another advantage for you. Listen to me; you are so happy now that you can hear anything. Your odious aunt, and her equally odious friends, are spreading the report that your residence with Dr. Baleinier—"

"Was rendered necessary by the derangement of my mind," said Adrienne, with a smile. "I expected that."

"It is stupid enough; but, as your resolution to live alone makes many envious of you, and many hostile, you must feel that there will be no want of persons ready to believe the most absurd calumny possible."

"I hope as much. To pass for mad in the eyes of fools is very flattering."

"Yes; but to prove to fools that they are fools, and that in the face of all Paris, is much more amusing. Now, people begin to talk of your absence; you have given up

your daily rides; for some time my niece has appeared alone in our box at the Opera; you wish to kill the time till to-morrow—well! here is an excellent opportunity. It is two o'clock; at half-past three my niece will come in the carriage; the weather is splendid; there is sure to be a crowd in the Bois de Bologne. You can take a delightful ride, and be seen by everybody. Then, as the air and movement will have calmed your fever of happiness, I will commence my magic this evening, and take you to India."

"To India?"

"Into the midst of one of those wild forests, in which roar the lion, the panther, and the tiger. We will have this heroic combat, which so moved you just now, under our own eyes, in all its terrible reality."

"Really, my dear count, you must be joking."

"Not at all; I promise to show you real wild beasts, formidable tenants of the country of our demi-god—growling tigers—roaring lions—do you not think that will be better than books?"

"But how?"

"Come! I must give you the secret of my supernatural power. On returning

from your ride, you shall dine with my niece, and we will go together to a very curious spectacle, now exhibiting at the Porte-Saint-Martin Theater. A most extraordinary lion-tamer there shows you a number of wild beasts, in a state of nature, in the midst of a forest (here only commences the illusion), and has fierce combats with them all—tigers, lions, and panthers. All Paris is crowding to these representations, and all Paris will see you there, more charming than ever."

"I accept your offer," said Adrienne, with childish delight. "Yes, you are right. I shall feel a strange pleasure in beholding these ferocious monsters, who will remind me of those that my demi-god so heroically overcame. I accept also, because, for the first time in my life, I am anxious to be admired—even by everybody. I accept finally because—" Here Mdlle. de Cardoville was interrupted by a low knock at the door, and by the entrance of Florine, who announced M. Rodin.

CHAPTER X.

THE EXECUTION.

RODIN entered. A rapid glance at Mdlle. de Cardoville and M. de Montbron told him at once that he was in a dilemma. In fact, nothing could be less encouraging than the faces of Adrienne and the count. The latter, when he disliked people, exhibited his antipathy, as we have already said, by an impertinently aggressive manner, which had before now occasioned a good number of duels. At sight of Rodin, his countenance at once assumed a harsh and insolent expression; resting his elbow on the chimney-piece, and conversing with Adrienne, he looked disdainfully over his shoulder, without taking the least notice of the Jesuit's low bow. On the other hand, at sight of this man, Mdlle. de Cardoville almost felt surprise that she should experience no movement of anger or hatred. The brilliant flame which burned in her heart purified it from every vindictive sentiment. She smiled, on the contrary; for,

glancing with gentle pride at the Indian Bacchus, and then at herself, she asked herself what two beings, so young, and fair, and free, and loving, could have to fear from this old, sordid man, with his ignoble and base countenance, now advancing toward her with the writhing of a reptile. In a word, far from feeling anger or aversion with regard to Rodin, the young lady seemed full of the spirit of mocking gayety, and her large eyes, already lighted up with happiness, now sparkled with irony and mischief. Rodin felt himself ill at ease. People of his stamp greatly prefer violent to mocking enemies. They can encounter bursts of rage—sometimes by falling on their knees, weeping, groaning, and beating their breasts—sometimes by turning on their adversary, armed and implacable. But they are easily disconcerted by biting raillery; and thus it was with Rodin. He saw that, between Adrienne de Cardoville and M. de Montbron, he was about to be placed in what is vulgarly termed a "regular fix."

The count opened the fire; still glancing over his shoulder, he said to Rodin: "Ah! you are here, my benevolent gentleman!"

"Pray, sir, draw a little nearer," said Adrienne, with a mocking smile. "Best

of friends and model of philosophers—as well as declared enemy of all fraud and falsehood—I have to pay you a thousand compliments."

"I accept anything from you, my dear young lady, even though undeserved," said the Jesuit, trying to smile, and thus exposing his vile yellow teeth; "but may I be informed how I have earned these compliments?"

"Your penetration, sir, which is rare—" replied Adrienne.

"And your veracity, sir," said the count, "which is perhaps no less rare—"

"In what have I exhibited my penetration, my dear young lady?" said Rodin, coldly. "In what my veracity?" added he, turning toward M. de Montbron.

"In what, sir?" said Adrienne. "Why, you have guessed a secret surrounded by difficulties and mystery. In a word, you have known how to read the depths of a woman's heart."

"I, my dear young lady?"

"You, sir! rejoice at it, for your penetration has had the most fortunate results."

"And your veracity has worked wonders," added the count.

"It is pleasant to do good, even without knowing it," said Rodin, still acting on

the defensive, and throwing side glances by turns on the count and Adrienne; "but will you inform me what it is that deserves this praise—"

"Gratitude obliges me to inform you of it," said Adrienne, maliciously; "you have discovered, and told Prince Djalma, that I was passionately in love. Well! I admire your penetration; it was true."

"You have also discovered, and told this lady, that Prince Djalma was passionately in love," resumed the count. "Well! I admire your penetration, my dear sir; it was true." Rodin looked confused, and at a loss for a reply.

"The person that I loved so passionately," said Adrienne, "was the prince."

"The person that the prince loved so passionately," resumed the count, "was this lady."

These revelations, so sudden and alarming, almost stunned Rodin; he remained mute and terrified, thinking of the future.

"Do you understand now, sir, the extent of our gratitude toward you?" resumed Adrienne, in a still more mocking tone. "Thanks to your sagacity, thanks to the touching interest you take in us, the prince and I are indebted to you for the knowledge of our mutual sentiments."

The Jesuit had now gradually recovered his presence of mind, and his apparent calmness greatly irritated M. de Montbron, who, but for Adrienne's presence, would have assumed another tone than jests.

"There is some mistake," said Rodin, "in what you have done me the honor to tell me, my dear young lady. I have never in my life spoken of the sentiments, however worthy and respectable, that you may entertain for Prince Djalma—"

"That is true," replied Adrienne; "with scrupulous and exquisite discretion, whenever you spoke to me of the deep love felt by Prince Djalma, you carried your reserve and delicacy so far as to inform me that it was not I whom he loved."

"And the same scruple induced you to tell the prince that Mdlle. de Cardoville loved some one passionately—but that he was not the person," added the count.

"Sir," answered Rodin, dryly, "I need hardly tell you that I have no desire to mix myself up with amorous intrigues."

"Come! this is either pride or modesty," said the count, insolently. "For your own interest, pray do not advance such things; for, if we took you at your word, and it became known, it might injure some of the nice little trades that you carry on."

"There is one at least," said Rodin, drawing himself up as proudly as M. de Montbron, "whose rude apprenticeship I shall owe to you. It is the wearisome one of listening to your discourse."

"I tell you what, my good sir!" replied the count, disdainfully: "you force me to remind you that there are more ways than one of chastising impudent rogues."

"My dear count!" said Adrienne to M. de Montbron, with an air of reproach.

With perfect coolness, Rodin replied: "I do not exactly see, sir, first, what courage is shown by threatening a poor old man like myself; and, secondly—"

"M. Rodin," said the count, interrupting the Jesuit, "first, a poor old man like you, who does evil under the shelter of the age he dishonors, is both cowardly and wicked, and deserves a double chastisement; secondly, with regard to this question of age, I am not aware that gamekeepers and policemen bow down respectfully to the gray coats of old wolves, and the gray hairs of old thieves. What do you think, my good sir?"

Still impassible, Rodin raised his flabby eyelid, fixed for hardly a second his little reptile eye upon the count, and darted at him one of his rapid, cold, and piercing

glances—and then the livid eyelid again covered the dull eye of that corpse-like face.

"Not having the disadvantage of being an old wolf, and still less an old thief," said Rodin, quietly, "you will permit me, sir, to take no account of the pursuit of hunters and police. As for the reproaches made me, I have a very simple method of answering—I do not say of justifying myself—I never justify myself."

"You don't say!" said the count.

"Never," resumed Rodin, coolly; "my acts are sufficient for that. I will then simply answer that seeing the deep, violent, almost fearful impression made by this lady on the prince—"

"Let this assurance which you give me of the prince's love," said Adrienne, interrupting Rodin with an enchanting smile, "absolve you of all the evil you wished to do me. The sight of our happiness be your only punishment!"

"It may be that I need neither absolution nor punishment, for, as I have already had the honor to observe to the count, my dear young lady, the future will justify my acts. Yes; it was my duty to tell the prince that you loved another than himself, and to tell you that he loved another

than yourself—all in your mutual interest. That my attachment for you may have misled me, is possible—I am not infallible; but, after my past conduct toward you, my dear young lady, I have, perhaps, some right to be astonished at seeing myself thus treated. This is not a complaint. If I never justify myself, I never complain, either."

"Now, really, there is something heroic in all this, my good sir," said the count. "You do not condescend to complain or justify yourself, with regard to the evil you have done."

"The evil I have done?" said Rodin, looking fixedly at the count. "Are we playing at enigmas."

"What, sir?" cried the count, with indignation; "is it nothing, by your falsehoods, to have plunged the prince into so frightful a state of despair that he has twice attempted his life? Is it nothing, by similar falsehoods, to have induced this lady to believe so cruel and complete an error that but for the resolution I have to-day taken, it might have led to the most fatal consequences?"

"And will you do me the honor to tell me, sir, what interest I could have in all this despair and error, admitting even that I had wished to produce them?"

"Some great interest, no doubt," said the count, bluntly; "the more dangerous that it is concealed. You are one of those, I see, to whom the woes of others are pleasure and profit."

"That is really too much, sir," said Rodin, bowing; "I should be quite contented with the profit."

"Your impudent coolness will not deceive me; this is a serious matter," said the count. "It is impossible that so perfidious a piece of roguery can be an isolated act. Who knows but this may still be one of the fruits of Madame de Saint-Dizier's hatred for Mdlle. de Cardoville?"

Adrienne had listened to the preceding discussion with deep attention. Suddenly she started, as if struck by a sudden revelation.

After a moment's silence, she said to Rodin, without anger, without bitterness, but with an expression of gentle and serene calmness: "We are told, sir, that happy love works miracles. I should be tempted to believe it; for, after some minutes' reflection, and when I recall certain circumstances, your conduct appears to me in quite a new light."

"And what may this new perspective be, my dear young lady?"

"That you may see it from my point of view, sir, allow me to remind you of a few facts. That sewing-girl was generously devoted to me; she had given me unquestionable proofs of her attachment. Her mind was equal to her noble heart; but she had an invincible dislike to you. All on a sudden she disappears mysteriously from my house, and you do your best to cast upon her odious suspicions. M. de Montbron has a paternal affection for me; but, as I must confess, little sympathy for you; and you have always tried to produce a coldness between us. Finally, Prince Djalma has a deep affection for me, and you employ the most perfidious treachery to kill that sentiment within him. For what end do you act thus? I do not know; but certainly with some hostile design."

"It appears to me, madame," said Rodin severely, "that you have forgotten services performed."

"I do not deny, sir, that you took me from the house of Dr. Baleinier; but, a few days sooner or later, I must infallibly have been released by M. de Montbron."

"You are right, my dear child," said the count; "it may be that your enemies wished to claim the merit of what must

necessarily have happened through the exertions of your friends."

"You are drowning, and I save you—it is all a mistake to feel grateful," said Rodin, bitterly; "some one else would no doubt have saved you a little later."

"The comparison is wanting in exactness," said Adrienne, with a smile; "a lunatic asylum is not a river, and though, from what I see, I think you quite capable of diving, you have had no occasion to swim on this occasion. You merely opened a door for me which would have opened of itself a little later."

"Very good, my dear child!" said the count, laughing heartily at Adrienne's reply.

"I know, sir, that your care did not extend to me only. The daughters of Marshal Simon were brought back by you; but we may imagine that the claim of the Duke de Ligny to the possession of his daughters would not have been in vain. You returned to an old soldier his imperial cross, which he held to be a sacred relic; it is a very touching incident. Finally, you unmasked the Abbe d'Aigrigny and Dr. Baleinier; but I had already made up my mind to unmask them. However, all this proves that you are a very clever man—"

"Oh, madame!" said Rodin, humbly.

"Full of resources and invention—"

"Oh, madame!"

"It is not my fault if, in our long interview at Dr. Baleinier's, you betrayed that superiority of mind which struck me so forcibly, and which seems to embarrass you so much at present. What would you have, sir?—great minds like yours find it difficult to maintain their incognito. Yet, as by different ways—oh! very different," added the young lady, maliciously, "we are tending to the same end (still keeping in view our conversation at Dr. Baleinier's), I wish, for the sake of our future communion, as you call it, to give you a piece of advice, and speak frankly to you."

Rodin had listened to Mdlle. de Cardoville with apparent impassibility, holding his hat under his arm, and twirling his thumbs, while his hands were crossed upon his waistcoat. The only external mark of the intense agitation into which he was thrown by the calm words of Adrienne was that the livid eyelids of the Jesuit, which had been hypocritically closed, became gradually red, as the blood flowed into them. Nevertheless, he answered Mdlle. de Cardoville in a firm voice, and

with a low bow: "Good advice and frankness are always excellent things."

"You see, sir," resumed Adrienne, with some excitement, "happy love bestows such penetration, such energy, such courage, as enables one to laugh at perils, to detect stratagems, and to defy hatred. Believe me, the divine light which surrounds two loving hearts will be sufficient to disperse all darkness, and reveal every snare. You see, in India—excuse my weakness, but I like to talk of India," added the young girl, with a smile of indescribable grace and meaning—"in India, when travelers sleep at night, they kindle great fires round their ajoupa (excuse this touch of local coloring), and far as extends the luminous circle it puts to flight by its mere brilliancy all the impure and venomous reptiles that shun the day and live only in darkness."

"The meaning of this comparison has quite escaped me," said Rodin, continuing to twirl his thumbs, and half raising his eyelids, which were getting redder and redder.

"I will speak more plainly," said Adrienne, with a smile. "Suppose, sir, that the last is a service which you have rendered me and the prince—for you only pro-

ceed by way of services—that, I acknowledge, is novel and ingenious."

"Bravo, my dear child!" said the count, joyfully. "The execution will be complete."

"Oh! this is meant for an execution?" said Rodin, still impassible.

"No, sir," answered Adrienne, with a smile; "it is a simple conversation between a poor young girl and an old philosopher, the friend of humanity. Suppose, then, that these frequent services that you have rendered to me and mine have suddenly opened my eyes; or, rather," added the young girl, in a serious tone, "suppose that Heaven, who gives to the mother the instinct to defend her child, has given me, along with happiness, the instinct to preserve my happiness, and that a vague presentiment, by throwing light on a thousand circumstances until now obscure, has suddenly revealed to me that, instead of being a friend, you are, perhaps, the most dangerous enemy of myself and family."

"So we pass from the execution to suppositions," said Rodin, still immovable.

"And from suppositions, sir, if you must have it, to certainty," resumed Adrienne, with dignified firmness; "yes, now I be-

lieve that I was for a while your dupe, and I tell you, without hate, without anger, but with regret—that it is painful to see a man of your sense and intelligence stoop to such machinations, and, after having recourse to so many diabolical maneuvers, finish at last by being ridiculous; for, believe me, there is nothing more ridiculous for a man like you than to be vanquished by a young girl, who has no weapon, no defense, no instructor, but her love. In a word, sir, I look upon you from to-day as an implacable and dangerous enemy; for I half perceive your aim, without guessing by what means you will seek to accomplish it. No doubt your future means will be worthy of the past. Well! in spite of all this, I do not fear you. From to-morrow, my family will be informed of everything, and an active, intelligent, resolute union will keep us all upon our guard, for it doubtless concerns this enormous inheritance, of which they wish to deprive us. Now, what connection can there be between the wrongs I reproach you with and the pecuniary end proposed? I do not at all know—but you have told me yourself that our enemies are so dangerously skillful and their craft so far-reaching that we must expect all, be prepared for

all. I will remember the lesson. I have promised you frankness, sir, and now I suppose you have it."

"It would be an imprudent frankness if I were your enemy," said Rodin, still impassible; "but you also promised me some advice, my dear young lady."

"My advice will be short; do not attempt to continue the struggle, because, you see, there is something stronger than you and yours—it is a woman's resolve, defending her happiness."

Adrienne pronounced these last words with so sovereign a confidence; her beautiful countenance shone, as it were, with such intrepid joy, that Rodin, notwithstanding his phlegmatic audacity, was for a moment frightened. Yet he did not appear in the least disconcerted; and, after a moment's silence, he resumed, with an air of almost contemptuous compassion: "My dear young lady, we may perhaps never meet again; it is probable. Only remember one thing, which I now repeat to you: I never justify myself. The future will provide for that. Notwithstanding which, my dear young lady, I am your very humble servant;" and he made her a low bow.

"Count, I beg to salute you most re-

spectfully," he added, bowing still more humbly to M. de Montbron; and he went out.

Hardly had Rodin left the room than Adrienne ran to her desk, and writing a few hasty lines, sealed the note, and said to M. de Montbron: "I shall not see the prince before to-morrow—as much from superstition of the heart as because it is necessary for my plans that this interview should be attended with some little solemnity. You shall know all; but I write to him on the instant, for, with an enemy like M. Rodin, one must be prepared for all."

"You are right, my dear child; quick! the letter." Adrienne gave it to him.

"I tell him enough," said she, "to calm his grief; and not enough to deprive me of the delicious happiness of the surprise I reserve for to-morrow."

"All this has as much sense as heart in it; I will hasten to the prince's abode, to deliver your letter. I shall not see him, for I could not answer for myself. But come! our proposed drive, our evening's amusement, are still to hold good."

"Certainly. I have more need than ever to divert my thoughts till to-morrow. I feel, too, that the fresh air will do me

good, for this interview with M. Rodin has warmed me a little."

"The old wretch! but we will talk further of him. I will hasten to the prince's and return with Madame de Morinval, to fetch you to the Champs-Elysees."

The Count de Montbron withdrew precipitately, as joyful at his departure as he had been sad on his arrival.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHAMPS-ELYSEES.

It was about two hours after the interview of Rodin with Mdlle. de Cardoville. Numerous loungers, attracted to the Champs-Elysees by the serenity of a fine spring day (it was toward the end of the month of March), stopped to admire a very handsome equipage. A bright-blue open carriage, with white-and-blue wheels, drawn by four superb horses, of cream color, with black manes, and harness glittering with silver ornaments, mounted by two boy postilions of equal size, with black velvet caps, light-blue cassimere jackets

with white collars, buckskin breeches, and top-boots; two tall, powdered footmen, also in light-blue livery, with white collars and facings, being seated in the rumble behind. No equipage could have been turned out in better style. The horses, full of blood, spirit, and vigor, were skillfully managed by the postilions, and stepped with singular regularity, gracefully keeping time in their movements, champing their bits covered with foam, and ever and anon shaking their cockades of blue and white silk, with long floating ends, and a bright rose blooming in the midst.

A man on horseback, dressed with elegant simplicity, keeping at the other side of the avenue, contemplated with proud satisfaction this equipage which he had, as it were, created. It was M. de Bonneville —Adrienne's equerry, as M. de Montbron called him—for the carriage belonged to that young lady. A change had taken place in the plan for this magic day's amusement. M. de Montbron had not been able to deliver Mdlle. de Cardoville's note to Prince Djalma. Faringhea had told him that the prince had gone that morning into the country with Marshal Simon, and would not be back before evening.

The letter should be given him on his arrival. Completely satisfied as to Djalma, knowing that he could find these few lines, which, without informing him of the happiness that awaited him, would at least give him some idea of it, Adrienne had followed the advice of M. de Montbron, and gone to the drive in her own carriage, to show all the world that she had quite made up her mind, in spite of the perfidious reports circulated by the Princess de Saint-Dizier, to keep to her resolution of living by herself in her own way. Adrienne wore a small white bonnet, with a fall of blonde, which well became her rosy face and golden hair; her high dress of garnet-colored velvet was almost hidden beneath a large green cashmere shawl. The young Marchioness de Morinval, who was also very pretty and elegant, was seated at her right. M. de Montbron occupied the front seat of the carriage.

Those who know the Parisian world, or, rather, that imperceptible fraction of the world of Paris, which goes every fine, sunny day to the Champs-Elysees, to see and be seen, will understand that the presence of Mdlle. de Cardoville on that brilliant promenade was an extraordinary and interesting event.

The world (as it is called) could hardly believe its eyes, on seeing this lady of eighteen, possessed of princely wealth, and belonging to the highest nobility, thus prove to every one, by this appearance in public, that she was living completely free and independent, contrary to all custom and received notions of propriety. This kind of emancipation appeared something monstrous, and people were almost astonished that the graceful and dignified bearing of the young lady should belie so completely the calumnies circulated by Madame de Saint-Dizier and her friends, with regard to the pretended madness of her niece. Many beaux, profiting by their acquaintance with the Marchioness de Morinval or M. de Montbron, came by turns to pay their respects, and rode for a few minutes by the side of the carriage, so as to have an opportunity of seeing, admiring, and perhaps hearing, Mdlle. de Cardoville; she surpassed their expectations, by talking with her usual grace and spirit. Then surprise and enthusiasm knew no bounds. What had at first been blamed as an almost insane caprice, was now voted a charming originality, and it only depended on Mdlle. de Cardoville herself to be declared from that day the queen of elegance

and fashion. The young lady understood very well the impression she had made; she felt proud and happy, for she thought of Djalma; when she compared him to all these men of fashion, her happiness was the more increased. And, verily, these young men, most of whom had never quitted Paris, or had ventured at most as far as Naples or Baden, looked insignificant enough by the side of Djalma, who, at his age, had so many times commanded and combated in bloody wars, and whose reputation for courage and generosity, mentioned by travelers with admiration, had already reached from India to Paris. And then, how could these charming exquisites, with their small hats, their scanty frock-coats, and their huge cravats, compare with the Indian prince, whose graceful and manly beauty was still further heightened by the splendor of a costume at once so rich and so picturesque?

On this happy day, all was joy and love for Adrienne. The sun, setting in a splendidly serene sky, flooded the promenade with its golden light. The air was warm. Carriages and horsemen passed and repassed in rapid succession; a light breeze played with the scarfs of the women and the plumes in their bonnets; all around

was noise, movement, sunshine. Adrienne, leaning back in her carriage, amused herself with watching this busy scene, sparkling with Parisian luxury; but, in the vortex of this brilliant chaos, she saw in thought the mild, melancholy countenance of Djalma—when suddenly something fell into her lap, and she started. It was a bunch of half-faded violets. At the same instant she heard a child's voice following the carriage, and saying: "For the love of Heaven, my good lady, one little sou!"

Adrienne turned her head, and saw a poor little girl, pale and wan, with mild, sorrowful features, scarcely covered with rags, holding out her hand, and raising her eyes in supplication. Though the striking contrast of extreme misery, side by side with extreme luxury, is so common that it no longer excites attention, Adrienne was deeply affected by it. She thought of Mother Bunch, now, perhaps, the victim of frightful destitution.

"Ah! at least," thought the young lady, "let not this day be one of happiness for me alone!"

She leaned from the carriage-window, and said to the poor child: "Have you a mother, my dear?"

"No, my lady, I have neither father nor mother."

"Who takes care of you?"

"No one, my lady. They give me nosegays to sell, and I must bring home money —or they beat me."

"Poor little thing!"

"A sou, my good lady—a sou, for the love of Heaven!" said the child, continuing to follow the carriage, which was then moving slowly.

"My dear count," said Adrienne, smiling, and addressing M. de Montbron, "you are, unfortunately, no novice at an elopment. Please to stretch forth your arms, take up that child with both hands, and lift her into the carriage. We can hide her between Lady de Morinval and myself; and we can drive away before any one perceives this audacious abduction."

"What!" said the count, in surprise. "You wish—"

"Yes; I beg you to do it."

"What a folly!"

"Yesterday you might, perhaps, have treated this caprice as a folly; but to-day," said Adrienne, laying great stress upon the word, and glancing at M. de Montbron with a significant air, "to-day, you should understand that it is almost a duty."

"Yes, I understand you, good and noble heart!" said the count, with emotion; while Lady de Morinval, who knew nothing of Mdlle. de Cardoville's love for Djalma, looked with as much surprise as curiosity at the count and the young lady.

M. de Montbron, leaning from the carriage, stretched out his arms toward the child, and said to her: "Give me your hands, little girl."

Though much astonished, the child obeyed mechanically, and held out both her little arms; then the count took her by the wrists, and lifted her lightly from the ground, which he did the more easily, as the carriage was very low and its progress by no means rapid. More stupefied than frightened, the child said not a word. Adrienne and Lady de Morinval made room for her to crouch down between them, and the little girl was soon hidden beneath the shawls of the two young women. All this was executed so quickly that it was hardly perceived by a few persons passing in the side-avenues.

"Now, my dear count," said Adrienne, radiant with pleasure, "let us make off at once with our prey."

M. de Montbron half rose and called to the postilions, "Home!" and the four

horses started at once into a rapid and regular trot.

"This day of happiness now seems consecrated, and my luxury is excused," thought Adrienne; "till I can again meet with that poor Mother Bunch, and from this day I will make every exertion to find her out; her place will at least not be quite empty."

There are often strange coincidences in life.

At the moment when this thought of the hunchback crossed the mind of Adrienne, a crowd had collected in one of the side-avenues, and other persons soon ran to join the group.

"Look, uncle!" said Lady de Morinval; "how many people are assembled yonder. What can it be? Shall we stop, and send to inquire?"

"I am sorry, my dear, but your curiosity cannot be satisfied," said the count, drawing out his watch; "it will soon be six o'clock, and the exhibition of the wild beasts begins at eight. We shall only just have time to go home and dine. Is not that your opinion, my dear child?" said he to Adrienne.

"And yours, Julia?" said Mdlle. de Cardoville to the marchioness.

"Oh, certainly!" answered her friend.

"I am the less inclined to delay," resumed the count, "as, when I have taken you to the Porte-Saint-Martin, I shall be obliged to go for half an hour to my club, to ballot for Lord Campbell, whom I propose."

"Then, Adrienne and I will be left alone at the play, uncle?"

"Your husband will go with you, I suppose."

"True, dear uncle; but do not quite leave us, because of that."

"Be sure I shall not; for I am curious as you are to see these terrible animals, and the famous Morok, the incomparable lion-tamer."

A few minutes after, Mdlle. de Cardoville's carriage had left the Champs-Elysees, carrying with it the little girl, and directing its course toward the Rue d'Anjou. As the brilliant equipage disappeared from the scene, the crowd, of which we have before spoken, greatly increased about one of the large trees in the Champs-Elysees, and expressions of pity were heard here and there among the groups. A lounger approached a young man on the skirts of the crowd, and said to him: "What is the matter, sir?"

"I hear it is a poor young girl, a hunchback, that has fallen from exhaustion."

"A hunchback! is that all? There will always be enough hunchbacks," said the lounger, brutally, with a coarse laugh.

"Hunchback or not, if she dies of hunger," answered the young man, scarcely able to restrain his indignation, "it will be no less sad—and there is really nothing to laugh at, sir."

"Die of hunger! pooh!" said the lounger, shrugging his shoulders. "It is only lazy scoundrels, that will not work, who die of hunger. And it serves them right."

"I wager, sir, there is one death you will never die of," cried the young man, incensed at the cruel insolence of the lounger.

"What do you mean?" answered the other, haughtily.

"I mean, sir, that your heart is not likely to kill you."

"Sir!" cried the lounger, in an angry tone.

"Well! what, sir?" replied the young man, looking full in his face.

"Nothing," said the lounger, turning abruptly on his heel, and grumbling as he sauntered toward an orange-colored cabriolet, on which was emblazoned an enormous coat-of-arms, surmounted by a baron's

crest. A servant in green livery, ridiculously laced in gold, was standing beside the horse, and did not perceive his master.

"Are you catching flies, fool?" said the latter, pushing him with his cane.

The servant turned round in confusion. "Sir," said he.

"Will you never learn to call me Monsieur le Baron, rascal?" cried his master, in a rage. "Open the door directly!"

The lounger was Baron Tripeaud, the manufacturing baron, the stock-jobber. The poor hunchback was Mother Bunch, who had, indeed, fallen with hunger and fatigue, while on her way to Mdlle. de Cardoville's. The unfortunate creature had found courage to brave the shame of the ridicule she so much feared, by returning to that house from which she was a voluntary exile; but this time, it was not for herself, but for her sister Cephyse—the Bacchanal Queen, who had returned to Paris the previous day, and whom Mother Bunch now sought, through the means of Adrienne, to rescue from a most dreadful fate.

. . . . . .

Two hours after these different scenes, an enormous crowd pressed round the doors of the Porte-Saint-Martin, to witness the exercises of Morok, who was about to per-

form a mock combat with the famous black panther of Java, named Death. Adrienne, accompanied by Lord and Lady de Morinval, now stepped from a carriage at the entrance of the theater. They were to be joined in the course of the evening by M. de Montbron, whom they had dropped, in passing, at his club.

CHAPTER XII.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

THE large theater of the Porte-Saint-Martin was crowded by an impatient multitude. All Paris had hurried with eager and burning curiosity to Morok's exhibition. It is quite unnecessary to say that the lion-tamer had completely abandoned his small taste in religious baubles, which he had so successfully carried on at the White Falcon Inn at Leipsic. There were, moreover, numerous tokens by which the surprising effects of Morok's sudden conversion had been blazoned in the most extraordinary pictures: the antiquated baubles in which he had formerly dealt would have found no sale in Paris. Morok had

nearly finished dressing himself, in one of the actors' rooms, which had been lent to him. Over a coat of mail, with cuishes and brassarts, he wore an ample pair of red trousers, fastened round his ankles by broad rings of gilt brass. His long caftan of black cloth, embroidered with scarlet and gold, was bound round his waist and wrist by other large rings of gilt metal. This somber costume imparted to him an aspect still more ferocious. His thick and red-haired beard fell in large quantities down to his chest, and a long piece of white muslin was folded round his red head. A devout missionary in Germany and an actor in Paris, Morok knew as well as his employers, the Jesuits, how to accommodate himself to circumstances.

Seated in one corner of the room, and contemplating with a sort of stupid admiration, was Jacques Rennepont, better known as "Sleepinbuff" (from the likelihood that he would end his days in rags, or his present antipathy to great care in dress). Since the day Hardy's factory had been destroyed by fire, Jacques had not quitted Morok, passing the nights in excesses, which had no baneful effects on the iron constitution of the lion-tamer. On the other's features, on the contrary, a

great alteration was perceptible; his hollow cheeks, marble pallor, his eyes, by turns dull and heavy, or gleaming with lurid fire, betrayed the ravages of debauchery; his parched lips were almost constantly curled by a bitter and sardonic smile. His spirit, once gay and sanguine, still struggled against the besotting influence of habitual intoxication. Unfitted for labor, no longer able to forego gross pleasures, Jacques sought to drown in wine the few virtuous impulses which he still possessed, and had sunk so low as to accept without shame the large dole of sensual gratification proffered him by Morok, who paid all the expenses of their orgies, but never gave him money, in order that he might be completely dependent on him. After gazing at Morok for some time in amazement, Jacques said to him, in a familiar tone: "Well, yours is a famous trade; you may boast that, at this moment, there are not two men like you in the whole world. That's flattering. It's a pity you don't stick to this fine trade."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, how is the conspiracy going on in whose honor you make me keep it up all day and all night?"

"It is working, but the time is not yet

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—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4, p. 312.

come; that is why I wish to have you always at hand, till the great day. Do you complain?"

"Hang it, no!" said Jacques. "What could I do? Burned up with brandy as I am, if I wanted to work, I've no longer the strength to do so. I have not, like you, a head of marble and a body of iron; but as for fuddling myself with gunpowder, instead of anything else, that'll do for me; I'm only fit for that work, now—and then, it will drive away thought."

"Of what kind?"

"You know that when I do think, I think only of one thing," said Jacques, gloomily.

"The Bacchanal Queen?—still?" said Morok, in a disdainful tone.

"Still! rather: when I shall think of her no longer I shall be dead—or stupefied. Fiend!"

"You were never better or more intelligent, you fool!" replied Morok, fastening his turban. The conversation was here interrupted. Morok's aider entered hastily.

The gigantic form of this Hercules had increased in width. He was habited like Alcides; his enormous limbs, furrowed with veins as thick as whipcord, were cov-

ered with a close-fitting flesh-colored garment, to which a pair of red drawers formed a strong contrast.

"Why do you rush in like a storm, Goliath?" said Morok.

"There's a pretty storm in the house; they are beginning to get impatient, and are calling out like madmen. But if that were all!"

"Well, what else?"

"*Death* will not be able to play this evening."

Morok turned quickly round. He seemed uneasy. "Why so?" he exclaimed.

"I have just seen her; she's crouching at the bottom of her cage; her ears lie so close to her head she looks as if they had been cut off. You know what that means."

"Is that all?" said Morok, turning to the glass to complete his headdress.

"It's quite enough; she's in one of her tearing fits. Since that night, in Germany, when she ripped up that old hack of a white horse, I've not seen her look so savage! her eyes shine like burning candles."

"Then she must have her fine collar on," said Morok, quietly.

"Her fine collar?"

"Yes; her spring-collar."

"And I must be lady's-maid," said the giant. "A nice toilet to attend to!"

"Hold your tongue?"

"That's not all—" continued Goliath, hesitating.

"What more?"

"I might as well tell you at once."

"Will you speak?"

"Well!—he is here."

"Who, you stupid brute?"

"The Englishman!"

Morok started; his arms fell powerless by his side. Jacques was struck with the lion-tamer's paleness and troubled countenance.

"The Englishman! — you have seen him?" cried Morok, addressing Goliath. "You are quite sure?"

"Quite sure. I was looking through the peephole in the curtain; I saw him in one of the stage-boxes—he wishes to see things close; he's easy to recognize, with his pointed forehead, big nose, and goggle eyes."

Morok shuddered again; usually fierce and unmoved, he appeared to be more and more agitated, and so alarmed that Jacques said to him: "Who is this Englishman?"

"He has followed me from Strasburg, where he fell in with me," said Morok,

with visible dejection. "He traveled with his own horses, by short stages, as I did; stopping where I stopped, so as never to miss one of my exhibitions. But two days before I arrived at Paris, he left me—I thought I was rid of him," said Morok, with a sigh.

"Rid of him!—how you talk!" replied Jacques, surprised; "such a good customer, such an admirer!"

"Ay!" said Morok, becoming more and more agitated; "this wretch has wagered an enormous sum that I will be devoured in his presence, during one of my performances; he hopes to win his wager—that is why he follows me about."

Sleepinbuff found the John Bull's idea so amusingly eccentric that, for the first time since a very long period, he burst into a peal of hearty laughter. Morok, pale with rage, rushed toward him with so menacing an air that Goliath was obliged to interpose.

"Come, come," said Jacques, "don't be angry; if it is serious, I will not laugh any more."

Morok was appeased, and said to Sleepinbuff, in a hoarse voice: "Do you think me a coward?"

"No, by heaven!"

"Well! and yet this Englishman, with his grotesque face, frightens me more than my tiger or my panther!"

"You say so, and I believe it," replied Jacques; "but I cannot understand why the presence of this man should alarm you."

"But consider, you dull knave!" cried Morok, "that, obliged to watch incessantly the least movement of the ferocious beast, whom I keep in subjection by my action and my looks, there is something terrible in knowing that two eyes are there—always there—fixed—waiting till the least absence of mind shall expose me to be torn in pieces by the animals."

"Now, I understand," said Jacques, shuddering in his turn. "It is terrible."

"Yes; for once there, though I may not see this cursed Englishman, I fancy I have his two round eyes, fixed and wide open, always before me. My tiger *Cain* once nearly mutilated my arm, when my attention was drawn away by this Englishman, whom the devil take! Blood and thunder!" cried Morok; "this man will be fatal to me." And Morok paced the room in great agitation.

"Besides, *Death* lays her ears close to her skull," said Goliath, brutally. "If you

persist—mind, I tell you—the Englishman will win his wager this evening."

"Go away, you brute!—don't vex my head with your confounded predictions," cried Morok; "go and prepare *Death's* collar."

"Well, every one to his taste; you wish the panther to *taste* you," said the giant, stalking heavily away, after this joke.

"But if you feel these fears," said Jacques, "why do you not say that the panther is ill?"

Morok shrugged his shoulders, and replied with a sort of feverish ferocity: "Have you ever heard of the fierce pleasure of the gamester, who stakes his honor, his life, upon a card? Well! I, too—in these daily exhibitions where my life is at stake—find a wild, fierce pleasure in braving death, before a crowded assembly, shuddering and terrified at my audacity. Yes, even in the fear with which this Englishman inspires me, I find, in spite of myself, a terrible excitement, which I abhor, and which yet subjugates me."

At this moment, the stage-manager entered the room, and interrupted the beast-tamer. "May we give the signal, M. Morok?" said the stage-manager. "The overture will not last above ten minutes."

"I am ready," said Morok.

"The police-inspector has just now given orders that the double chain of the panther, and the iron ring riveted to the floor of the stage, at the end of the cavern in the foreground, shall be again examined; and everything has been reported quite secure."

"Yes—secure—except for me," murmured the beast-tamer.

"So, M. Morok, the signal may be given?"

"The signal may be given," replied Morok. And the manager went out.

CHAPTER XIII.

UP WITH THE CURTAIN.

THE usual bell sounded with solemnity behind the scenes; the overture began, and, to say the truth, but little attention was paid to it. The interior of the theater offered a very animated view. With the exception of two stage-boxes even with the dress-circle, one to the left, the other to the right of the audience, every seat was occupied. A great number of very fashionable

ladies, attracted, as is always the case, by the strange wildness of the spectacle, filled the boxes. The stalls were crowded by most of the young men who, in the morning, had walked their horses on the Champs-Elysees. The observations which passed from one stall to another will give some idea of their conversation.

"Do you know, my dear boy, there would not be so crowded or fashionable an audience to witness Racine's 'Athalie'?"

"Undoubtedly. What is the beggarly howling of an actor compared to the roaring of the lion?"

"I cannot understand how the authorities permit this Morok to fasten his panther with a chain to an iron ring in the corner of the stage. If the chain were to break?"

"Talking of broken chains—there's little Mme. de Blinville, who is no tigress. Do you see her in the second tier, opposite?"

"It becomes her very well to have broken, as you say, the marriage chain; she looks very well this season."

"Oh! there is the beautiful Duchess de Saint-Prix; all the world is here to-night—I don't speak of ourselves."

"It is a regular opera-night—what a festive scene!"

"Well, after all, people do well to amuse

themselves; perhaps it will not be for long."

"Why so?"

"Suppose the cholera were to come to Paris?"

"Oh! nonsense! Do *you* believe in the cholera?"

"To be sure I do! He's coming from the north, with his walking-stick under his arm."

"The devil take him on the road! don't let us see his green visage here."

"They say he's at London."

"A pleasant journey to him!"

"Come, let us talk of something else; it may be a weakness, if you please, but I call this a dull subject."

"I believe you."

"Oh! gentlemen—I am not mistaken—no—it is she!"

"Who, then?"

"Mdlle. de Cardoville! She is coming into the stage-box with Morinval and his wife. It is a complete resuscitation; this morning on the Champs-Elysees, in the evening here."

"Faith, you are right! It is Mdlle. de Cardoville."

"Good heaven! how lovely she is!"

"Lend me your eye-glass."

"Well, what do you think of her?"

"Exquisite—dazzling!"

"And in addition to her beauty, an inexhaustible flow of wit, three hundred thousand francs a year, high birth, eighteen years of age, and—free as air."

"Yes, that is to say, that, provided it pleased her, I might be to-morrow — or even to-day—the happiest of men."

"It is enough to turn one's brain."

"I am told that her mansion, Rue d'Anjou, is like an enchanted palace: a great deal is said about a bathroom and bedroom, worthy of the Arabian Nights."

"And free as air—I come back to that."

"Ah, if I were in her place!"

"My levity would be quite shocking."

"Oh! gentlemen, what a happy man will he be who is loved first!"

"You think, then, that she will have many lovers?"

"Being as free as air—"

"All the boxes are full, except the stage-box opposite to that in which Mdlle. de Cardoville is seated. Happy the occupiers of that box!"

"Did you see the English embassador's lady in the dress-circle?"

"And the Princess d'Alvimar—what an enormous bouquet!"

"I should like to know the name—of that nosegay."

"Oh!—it's Germigny."

"How flattering for the lions and tigers, to attract so fashionable an audience."

"Do you notice, gentlemen, how all the women are eye-glassing Mdlle. de Cardoville?"

"She makes a sensation."

"She is right to show herself; they gave her out as mad."

"Oh! gentlemen, what a capital phiz!"

"Where—where?"

"There—in the omnibus-box beneath Mdlle. de Cardoville's."

"It's a Nuremburg nutcracker."

"An ourang-outang!"

"Did you ever see such round, staring eyes?"

"And the nose!"

"And the forehead!"

"It's a caricature."

"Order, order! the curtain rises."

And, in fact, the curtain rose. Some explanation is necessary for the clear understanding of what follows. In the lower stage-box, to the left of the audience, were several persons, who had been referred to by the young men in the stalls. The omnibus-box was occupied by the Englishman,

the eccentric and portentous bettor, whose presence inspired Morok with so much dread.

It would require Hoffman's rare and fantastic genius to describe worthily that countenance, at once grotesque and frightful, as it stood out from the background of the box. This Englishman was about fifty years old; his forehead was quite bald and of a conical shape; beneath this forehead, surmounted by eyebrows like parenthesis marks, glittered large, green eyes, remarkably round and staring, and set very close to a hooked nose, extremely sharp and prominent; a chin like that on the old-fashioned nutcrackers was half hidden in a broad and ample white cravat, as stiffly starched as the round-cornered shirt-collar which nearly touched his ears. The face was exceedingly thin and bony, and yet the complexion was high colored, approaching to purple, which made the bright green of the pupils, and the white of the other part of the eyes, still more conspicuous. The mouth, which was very wide, sometimes whistled inaudibly the tune of a Scotch jig (always the same tune), sometimes was slightly curled with a sardonic smile. The Englishman was dressed with extreme care; his blue coat,

with brass buttons, displayed his spotless waistcoat, snowy white as his ample cravat; his shirt was fastened with two magnificent ruby studs, and his patrician hands were carefully kid-gloved.

To any one who knew the eccentric and cruel desire which attracted this man to every representation, his grotesque face became almost terrific, instead of exciting ridicule; and it was easy to understand the dread experienced by Morok at sight of those great, staring round eyes, which appeared to watch for the death of the lion-tamer (what a horrible death!) with unshaken confidence. Above the dark box of the Englishman, affording a graceful contrast, were seated the Morinvals and Mdlle. de Cardoville. The latter was placed nearest the stage. Her head was uncovered, and she wore a dress of sky-blue China crape, ornamented at the bosom with a brooch of the finest Oriental pearls —nothing more; yet Adrienne, thus attired, was charming. She held in her hand an enormous bouquet, composed of the rarest flowers of India: the stephanotis and the gardenia mingled the dead white of their blossoms with the purple hibiscus and Java amaryllis.

Madame de Morinval, seated on the op-

posite side of the box, was dressed with equal taste and simplicity; Morinval, a fair and very handsome young man, of elegant appearance, was behind the two ladies. M. de Montbron was expected to arrive every moment. The reader will please to recollect that the stage-box to the right of the audience, opposite Adrienne's, had remained till then quite empty. The stage represented one of the gigantic forests of India. In the background, tall exotic trees rose in spiral or spreading forms, among rugged masses of perpendicular rocks, with here and there glimpses of a tropical sky. The side-scenes formed tufts of trees, interspersed with rocks; and at the side which was immediately beneath Adrienne's box appeared the irregular opening of a deep and gloomy cavern, round which were heaped huge blocks of granite, as if thrown together by some convulsion of nature. This scenery, full of a wild and savage grandeur, was wonderfully "built up," so as to make the illusion as complete as possible; the footlights were lowered, and, being covered with a purple shade, threw over this landscape a subdued reddish light, which increased the gloomy and startling effect of the whole. Adrienne, leaning forward from the box,

with cheeks slightly flushed, sparkling eyes, and throbbing heart, sought to trace in this scene the solitary forest described by the traveler who had eulogized Djalma's generosity and courage, when he threw himself upon a ferocious tigress to save the life of a poor black slave. Chance coincided wonderfully indeed with her recollections. Absorbed in the contemplation of the scenery and the thoughts awakened in her heart, she paid no attention to what was passing in the house. And yet something calculated to excite curiosity was taking place in the opposite stage-box.

The door of this box opened. A man about forty years of age, of a yellow complexion, entered; he was clothed after the East Indian fashion, in a long robe of orange silk, bound round the waist with a green sash, and he wore a small white turban. He placed two chairs at the front of the box; and, having glanced round the house for a moment, he started, his black eyes sparkled, and he went out quickly. That man was Faringhea. His apparition caused surprise and curiosity in the theater; the majority of the spectators not having, like Adrienne, a thousand reasons for being absorbed in the contemplation of a pict-

uresque set scene. The public attention was still more excited when they saw the box, which Faringhea had just left, entered by a youth of rare beauty, also dressed Oriental fashion, in a long robe of white cashmere with flowing sleeves, with a scarlet turban striped with gold on his head, and a sash to correspond, in which was stuck a long dagger, glittering with precious stones. This young man was Prince Djalma. For an instant he remained standing at the door, and cast a look of indifference upon the immense theater, crowded with people; then, stepping forward with a majestic and tranquil air, the prince seated himself negligently on one of the chairs, and, turning his head in a few moments toward the entrance, appeared surprised at not seeing some person whom he doubtless expected. This person appeared at length; the boxkeeper had been assisting her to take off her cloak. She was a charming, fair-haired girl, attired with more show than taste, in a dress of white silk, with broad cherry-colored stripes, made ultra-fashionably low, and with short sleeves; a large bow of cherry-colored ribbon was placed on each side of her light hair, and set off the prettiest, sprightliest, most willful little face in the world.

It was Rose-Pompon. Her pretty arms were partly covered by long white gloves, and ridiculously loaded with bracelets; in her hand she carried an enormous bouquet of roses.

Far from imitating the calm demeanor of Djalma, Rose-Pompon skipped into the box, moved the chairs about noisily, and fidgeted on her seat for some time, to display her fine dress; then, without being in the least intimidated by the presence of the brilliant assembly, she, with a little coquettish air, held her bouquet toward Djalma, that he might smell it, and appeared finally to establish herself on her seat. Faringhea came in, shut the door of the box, and seated himself behind the prince. Adrienne, still completely absorbed in the contemplation of the Indian forest, and in her own sweet thoughts, had not observed the new-comers. As she was turning her head completely toward the stage, and Djalma could not, for the moment, see even her profile, he, on his side, had not recognized Mdlle. de Cardoville.

CHAPTER XIV.

DEATH.

THE pantomime opening, by which was introduced the combat of Morok with the black panther, was so unmeaning that the majority of the audience paid no attention to it, reserving all their interest for the scene in which the lion-tamer was to make his appearance.

This indifference of the public explains the curiosity excited in the theater by the arrival of Faringhea and Djalma—a curiosity which expressed itself (as at this day, when uncommon foreigners appear in public) by a slight murmur and general movement among the crowd. The sprightly, pretty face of Rose-Pompon, always charming, in spite of her singularly staring dress, in style so ridiculous for such a theater, and her light and familiar manner toward the handsome Indian who accompanied her, increased and animated the general surprise; for, at this moment, Rose-Pompon, yielding without reserve

to a movement of teasing coquetry, had held up, as we have already stated, her large bunch of roses to Djalma. But the prince, at sight of the landscape which reminded him of his country, instead of appearing sensible to this pretty provocation, remained for some minutes as in a dream, with his eyes fixed upon the stage. Then Rose-Pompon began to beat time on the front of the box with her bouquet, while the somewhat too visible movement of her pretty shoulders showed that this devoted dancer was thinking of fast-life dances, as the orchestra struck up a more lively strain. Placed directly opposite the box in which Faringhea, Djalma, and Rose-Pompon had just taken their seats, Lady Morinval soon perceived the arrival of these two personages, and particularly the eccentric coquetries of Rose-Pompon. Immediately, the young marchioness, leaning over toward Mdlle. de Cardoville, who was still absorbed in memories ineffable, said to her, laughing: "My dear, the most amusing part of the performance is not upon the stage. Look just opposite."

"Just opposite?" repeated Adrienne, mechanically; and, turning toward Lady Morinval with an air of surprise, she glanced in the direction pointed out.

She looked—what did she see?—Djalma seated by the side of a young woman, who was familiarly offering to his sense of smell the perfume of her bouquet. Amazed, struck almost literally to the heart, as by an electric shock, swift, sharp, and painful, Adrienne became deadly pale. From instinct, she shut her eyes for a second, in order *not to see*—as men try to ward off the dagger, which, having once dealt the blow, threatens to strike again. Then suddenly, to this feeling of grief succeeded a reflection, terrible both to her love and to her wounded pride.

"Djalma is present with this woman, though he must have received my letter," she said to herself—"wherein he was informed of the happiness that awaited him."

At the idea of so cruel an insult, a blush of shame and indignation displaced Adrienne's paleness, who, overwhelmed by this sad reality, said to herself: "Rodin did not deceive me."

We abandon all idea of picturing the lightning-like rapidity of certain emotions which in a moment may torture—may kill you in the space of a minute. Thus Adrienne was precipitated from the most radiant happiness to the lowest depths of an abyss of the most heartrending grief, in

less than a second; for a second had hard ly elapsed before she replied to Lady Morinval: "What is there, then, so curious, opposite to us, my dear Julia?"

This evasive question gave Adrienne time to recover her self-possession. Fortunately, thanks to the thick folds of hair which almost entirely concealed her cheeks, the rapid and sudden changes from pallor to blush escaped the notice of Lady Morinval, who gayly replied: "What, my dear, do you not perceive those East Indians who have just entered the box immediately opposite to ours? There, just before us!"

"Yes, I see them; but what then?" replied Adrienne, in a firm tone.

"And don't you observe anything remarkable?" said the marchioness.

"Don't be too hard, ladies," laughingly interposed the marquis; "we ought to allow the poor foreigners some little indulgence. They are ignorant of our manners and customs; were it not for that they would never appear in the face of all Paris in such dubious company."

"Indeed," said Adrienne, with a bitter smile, "their simplicity is touching; we must pity them."

"And, unfortunately, the girl is charming, spite of her low dress and bare arms,"

said the marchioness; "she cannot be more than sixteen or seventeen at most. Look at her, my dear Adrienne; what a pity!"

"It is one of your charitable days, my dear Julia," answered Adrienne; "we are to pity the Indians, to pity this creature, and—pray, whom else are we to pity?"

"We will not pity that handsome Indian, in his red-and-gold turban," said the marquis, laughing, "for, if this goes on, the girl with the cherry-colored ribbons will be giving him a kiss. See how she leans toward her sultan."

"They are very amusing," said the marchioness, sharing the hilarity of her husband, and looking at Rose-Pompon through her glass; then she resumed, in about a minute, addressing herself to Adrienne: "I am quite certain of one thing. Notwithstanding her giddy airs, that girl is very fond of her Indian. I just saw a look that expresses a great deal."

"Why so much penetration, my dear Julia?" said Adrienne, mildly; "what interest have we to read the heart of that girl?"

"Why, if she loves her sultan, she is quite in the right," said the marquis, looking through his opera-glass in turn; "for, in my whole life, I never saw a more hand-

some fellow than that Indian. I can only catch his side-face, but the profile is pure and fine as an antique cameo. Do you not think so?" added the marquis, leaning toward Adrienne. "Of course it is only as a matter of art that I permit myself to ask you the question."

"As a work of *art*," answered Adrienne, "it is certainly very fine."

"But see!" said the marchioness; "how impertinent the little creature is! She is actually staring at us."

"Well!" said the marquis; "and she is actually laying her hand quite unceremoniously on her sultan's shoulder, to make him share, no doubt, in her admiration of you ladies."

In fact, Djalma, until now occupied with the contemplation of the scene which reminded him of his country, had remained insensible to the enticements of Rose-Pompon, and had not yet perceived Adrienne.

"Well now!" said Rose-Pompon, bustling herself about in front of the box and continuing to stare at Mdlle. de Cardoville, for it was she, and not the marchioness, who now drew her attention; "that is something quite out of the common way —a pretty woman, with red hair; but such

a sweet red, it must be owned. Look, Prince Charming!"

And so saying, she tapped Djalma lightly on the shoulder: he started at these words, turned round, and for the first time perceived Mdlle. de Cardoville.

Though he had been almost prepared for this meeting, the prince was so violently affected by it, that he was about involuntarily to rise, in a state of the utmost confusion; but he felt the iron hand of Faringhea laid heavily on his shoulder, and heard his whisper in Hindoostanee: "Courage! and by to-morrow she will be at your feet."

As Djalma still struggled to rise, the half-caste added, to restrain him: "Just now she grew pale and red with jealousy. No weakness, or all is lost!"

"So! there you are again, talking your dreadful gibberish," said Rose-Pompon, turning round toward Faringhea. "First of all, it is not polite, and then the language is so odd that one might suppose you were cracking nuts."

"I spoke of you to my master," said the half-caste; "he is preparing a surprise for you."

"A surprise? oh! that is different. Only make haste—do you hear, Prince Charm-

ing!" added she, looking tenderly at Djalma.

"My heart is breaking," said Djalma, in a hollow voice to Faringhea, still using the language of India.

"But to-morrow it will be bound with joy and love," answered the half-caste. "It is only by disdain that you can conquer a proud woman. To-morrow, I tell you, she will be trembling, confused, supplicating, at your feet!"

"To-morrow she will hate me like death!" replied the prince mournfully.

"Yes, were she now to see you weak and cowardly. It is now too late to draw back; look full at her, take the nosegay from this girl, and raise it to your lips. Instantly, you will see yonder woman, proud as she is, grow pale and red, as just now. Then will you believe me?"

Reduced by despair to make almost any attempt, and fascinated, in spite of himself, by the diabolical hints of Faringhea, Djalma looked for a second full at Mdlle. de Cardoville; then, with a trembling hand, he took the bouquet from Rose-Pompon, and, again looking at Adrienne, pressed it to his lips.

Upon this insolent bravado, Mdlle. de Cardoville could not restrain so sudden

and visible a pang that the prince was struck by it.

"She is yours," said the half-caste to him. "Did you see, my lord, how she trembled with jealousy?—Only have courage! and she is yours. She will soon prefer you to that handsome young man behind her—for *it is he* whom she has hitherto fancied herself in love with."

As if the half-caste had guessed the movement of rage and hatred which this revelation would excite in the heart of the prince, he hastily added: "Calmness and disdain! Is it not his turn now to hate you?"

The prince restrained himself, and drew his hand across his forehead, which glowed with anger.

"There now! what are you telling him, that vexes him so?" said Rose-Pompon to Faringhea, with pouting lip. Then, addressing Djalma, she continued: "Come, Prince Charming, as they say in the fairy-tale, give me back my flowers."

As she took it again, she added: "You have kissed it, and I could almost eat it." Then, with a sigh, and a passionate glance at Djalma, she said softly to herself: "That monster Ninny Moulin did not deceive me. All this is *quite proper;* I have not even

that to reproach myself with." And with her little white teeth she bit at a rosy nail of her right hand from which she had just drawn the glove.

It is hardly necessary to say that Adrienne's letter had not been delivered to the prince, and that he had not gone to pass the day in the country with Marshal Simon. During the three days in which Montbron had not seen Djalma, Faringhea had persuaded him that by affecting another passion he would bring Mdlle. de Cardoville to terms. With regard to Djalma's presence at the theater, Rodin had learned from her maid, Florine, that her mistress was to go in the evening to the Porte-Saint-Martin. Before Djalma had recognized her, Adrienne, who felt her strength failing her, was on the point of quitting the theater; the man, whom she had hitherto placed so high, whom she had regarded as a hero and a demi-god, and whom she had imagined plunged in such dreadful despair, that, led by the most tender pity, she had written to him with simple frankness that a sweet hope might calm his grief—replied to a generous mark of sincerity and love by making himself a ridiculous spectacle with a creature unworthy of him. What incurable wounds

for Adrienne's pride! It mattered little whether Djalma knew or not that she would be a spectator of the indignity. But when she saw herself recognized by the prince, when he carried the insult so far as to look full at her, and, at the same time, raise to his lips the creature's bouquet who accompanied him, Adrienne was seized with noble indignation, and felt sufficient courage to remain; instead of closing her eyes to evidence, she found a sort of barbarous pleasure in assisting at the agony and death of her pure and divine love. With head erect, proud and flashing eye, flushed cheek, and curling lip, she looked in her turn at the prince with disdainful steadiness. It was with a sardonic smile that she said to the marchioness, who, like many others of the spectators, was occupied with what was passing in the stage-box: "This revolting exhibition of savage manners is at least in accordance with the rest of the performance."

"Certainly," said the marchioness; "and my dear uncle will have lost, perhaps, the most amusing part."

"Montbron?" said Adrienne, hastily, with hardly repressed bitterness; "yes, he will regret not having *seen all.* I am impatient for his arrival. Is it not to him

that I am indebted for this charming evening?"

Perhaps Madame de Morinval would have remarked the expression of bitter irony that Adrienne could not altogether dissemble, if suddenly a hoarse and prolonged roar had not attracted her attention, as well as that of the rest of the audience, who had hitherto been quite indifferent to the scenes intended for an introduction to the appearance of Morok. Every eye was now turned instinctively toward the cavern, situated to the left of the stage, just below Mdlle. de Cardoville's box; a thrill of curiosity ran through the house. A second roar, deeper and more sonorous, and apparently expressive of more irritation than the first, now rose from the cave, the mouth of which was half hidden by artificial brambles, made so as to be easily put on one side. At this sound, the Englishman stood up in his little box, leaned half over the front, and began to rub his hands with great energy; then, remaining perfectly motionless, he fixed his large, green, glittering eyes on the mouth of the cavern.

At these ferocious howlings, Djalma also had started, notwithstanding the frenzy of love, hate, and jealousy, to which he was a prey. The sight of this forest, and the

roarings of the panther, filled him with deep emotion, for they recalled the remembrance of his country, and of those great hunts which, like war, have their own terrible excitement. Had he suddenly heard the horns and gongs of his father's army sounding to the charge, he could not have been transported with more savage ardor. And now deep growls, like distant thunder, almost drowned the roar of the panther. The lion and tiger, Judas and Cain, answered her from their dens at the back of the stage. On this frightful concert, with which his ears had been familiar in the midst of the solitudes of India, when he lay encamped, for the purposes of the chase or of war, Djalma's blood boiled in his veins. His eyes sparkled with a wild ardor. Leaning a little forward, with both hands pressed on the front of the box, his whole body trembled with a convulsive shudder. The audience, the theater, Adrienne herself, no longer existed for him; he was in a forest of his own land, tracking the tiger.

Then there mingled with his beauty so intrepid and ferocious an expression that Rose-Pompon looked at him with a sort of terror and passionate admiration. For the first time in her life, perhaps, her pretty

blue eyes, generally so gay and mischievous, expressed a serious emotion. She could not explain what she felt; but her heart seemed tightened, and beat violently, as though some calamity were at hand.

Yielding to a movement of involuntary fear, she seized Djalma by the arm, and said to him: "Do not stare so into that cavern; you frighten me."

Djalma did not hear what she said.

"Here he is! here he is!" murmured the crowd, almost with one voice, as Morok appeared at the back of the stage.

Dressed as we have described, Morok now carried in addition a bow and a long quiver full of arrows. He slowly descended the line of painted rocks, which came sloping down toward the center of the stage. From time to time, he stopped as if to listen, and appeared to advance with caution. Looking from one side to the other, his eyes involuntarily encountered the large, green eyes of the Englishman, whose box was close to the cavern. Instantly the lion-tamer's countenance was contracted in so frightful a manner that Lady Morinval, who was examining him closely with the aid of an excellent glass, said hastily to Adrienne: "My dear, the

man is afraid. Some misfortune will happen."

"How can accidents happen," said Adrienne, with a sardonic smile, "in the midst of this brilliant crowd, so well dressed and full of animation? Misfortunes here, this evening! why, dear Julia, you do not think it. It is in darkness and solitude that misfortunes come—never in the midst of a joyous crowd, and in all this blaze of light."

"Good gracious, Adrienne! take care!" cried the marchioness, unable to repress an exclamation of alarm, and seizing her arm, as if to draw her closer; "do you not see it?" And, with a trembling hand, she pointed to the cavern's mouth. Adrienne hastily bent forward, and looked in that direction. "Take care! do not lean so forward!" exclaimed Lady Morinval.

"Your terrors are nonsensical, my dear," said the marquis to his wife. "The panther is securely chained; and even were it to break its chain (which is impossible) we are here beyond its reach."

A long murmur of trembling curiosity here ran through the house, and every eye was intently fixed on the cavern. From among the artificial brambles, which she abruptly pushed aside with her broad

chest, the black panther suddenly appeared. Twice she stretched forth her flat head, illumined by yellow, flaming eyes; then, half opening her blood-red jaws, she uttered another roar, and exhibited two rows of formidable fangs. A double iron chain, and a collar also of iron, painted black, blended with the ebon shades of her hide, and with the darkness of the cavern. The illusion was complete, and the terrible animal seemed to be at liberty in her den.

"Ladies," said the marquis, suddenly, "look at those Indians. Their emotion makes them superb!"

In fact, the sight of the panther had raised the wild ardor of Djalma to its utmost pitch. His eyes sparkled in their pearly orbits like two black diamonds; his upper lip was curled convulsively with an expression of animal ferocity, as if he were in a violent paroxysm of rage.

Faringhea, now leaning on the front of the box, was also greatly excited, by reason of a strange coincidence. "That black panther of so rare a breed," thought he, "which I see here at Paris, upon a stage, must be the very one that the Malay"—the Thug who had tattooed Djalma at Java during his sleep—"took quite young

from his den, and sold to a European captain. Bowanee's power is everywhere!" added the Thug, in his sanguinary superstition.

"Do you not think," resumed the marquis, addressing Adrienne, "that those Indians are really splendid in their present attitude?"

"Perhaps they may have seen such a hunt in their own country," said Adrienne, as if she would recall and brave the most cruel remembrances.

"Adrienne," said the marchioness, suddenly, in an agitated voice, "the lion-tamer has now come nearer—is not his countenance fearful to look at?—I tell you he is afraid."

"In truth," observed the marquis, this time very seriously, "he is dreadfully pale, and seems to grow worse every minute, the nearer he approaches this side. It is said that, were he to lose his presence of mind for a single moment he would run the greatest danger."

"Oh! it would be horrible!" cried the marchioness, addressing Adrienne, "if he were wounded — there — under our eyes!"

"Every wound does not kill," replied her friend, with an accent of such cold indif-

ference that the marchioness looked at her with surprise, and said to her:

"My dear girl, what you say there is cruel!"

"It is the air of the place that acts on me," answered Adrienne, with an icy smile.

"Look! look! the lion-tamer is about to shoot his arrow at the panther," said the marquis, suddenly. "No doubt, he will next perform the hand-to-hand grapple."

Morok was at this moment in front of the stage, but he had yet to traverse its entire breadth to reach the cavern's mouth. He stopped an instant, adjusted an arrow to the string, knelt down behind a mass of rock, took deliberate aim—and then the arrow hissed across the stage, and was lost in the depths of the cavern, into which the panther had retired, after showing for a moment her threatening head to the audience. Hardly had the arrow disappeared, than Death, purposely irritated by Goliath (who was invisible), sent forth a howl of rage, as if she had been really wounded. Morok's actions became so expressive, he evinced so naturally his joy at having hit the wild beast, that a tempest of applause burst from every quarter of the house. Then, throwing away his bow, he drew

a dagger from his girdle, took it between his teeth, and began to crawl forward on hands and knees, as though he meant to surprise the wounded panther in her den. To render the illusion perfect, Death, again excited by Goliath, who struck her with an iron bar, sent forth frightful howlings from the depth of the cavern.

The gloomy aspect of the forest, only half-lighted with a reddish glare, was so effective — the howlings of the panther were so furious — the gestures, attitude and countenance of Morok were so expressive of terror, that the audience, attentive and trembling, now maintained a profound silence. Every one held his breath, and a kind of shudder came over the spectators, as though they expected some horrible event. What gave such a fearful air of truth to the pantomime of Morok was that, as he approached the cavern step by step, he approached also the Englishman's box. In spite of himself, the lion-tamer, fascinated by terror, could not take his eyes from the large green eyes of this man, and it seemed as if every one of the abrupt movements which he made in crawling along was produced by a species of magnetic attraction, caused by the fixed gaze of the fatal wagerer. Therefore, the nearer

Morok approached, the more ghastly and livid he became. At sight of this pantomime, which was no longer acting, but the real expression of intense fear, the deep and trembling silence which had reigned in the theater was once more interrupted by acclamations, with which were mingled the roarings of the panther, and the distant growls of the lion and tiger.

The Englishman, leaning almost out of his box, with a frightful sardonic smile on his lip, and with his large eyes still fixed, panted for breath. The perspiration ran down his bald red forehead, as if he had really expended an incredible amount of magnetic power in attracting Morok, whom he now saw close to the cavern entrance. The moment was decisive. Crouching down with his dagger in his hand, following with eye and gesture Death's every movement, who, roaring furiously, and opening wide her enormous jaws, seemed determined to guard the entrance of her den, Morok waited for the moment to rush upon her. There is such fascination in danger that Adrienne shared, in spite of herself, the feeling of painful curiosity, mixed with terror, that thrilled through all the spectators. Leaning forward like the marchioness, and gazing upon this

scene of fearful interest, the lady still held mechanically in her hand the Indian bouquet, preserved since the morning. Suddenly, Morok raised a wild shout, as he rushed toward Death, who answered this exclamation by a dreadful roar, and threw herself upon her master with so much fury that Adrienne, in alarm, believing the man lost, drew herself back, and covered her face with her hands. Her flowers slipped from her grasp, and, falling upon the stage, rolled into the cavern in which Morok was struggling with the panther.

Quick as lightning, supple and agile as a tiger, yielding to the intoxication of his love, and to the wild ardor excited in him by the roaring of the panther, Djalma sprung at one bound upon the stage, drew his dagger, and rushed into the cavern to recover Adrienne's nosegay. At that instant, Morok, being wounded, uttered a dreadful cry for help; the panther, rendered still more furious at sight of Djalma, made the most desperate efforts to break her chain. Unable to succeed in doing so, she rose upon her hind legs, in order to seize Djalma, then within reach of her sharp claws. It was only by bending down his head, throwing himself on his

knees, and twice plunging his dagger into her belly with the rapidity of lightning, that Djalma escaped certain death. The panther gave a howl, and fell with her whole weight upon the prince. For a second, during which lasted her terrible agony, nothing was seen but a confused and convulsive mass of black limbs, and white garments stained with blood—and then Djalma rose, pale, bleeding, for he was wounded—and, standing erect, his eye flashing with savage pride, his foot on the body of the panther, he held in his hand Adrienne's bouquet, and cast toward her a glance which told the intensity of his love. Then only did Adrienne feel her strength fail her—for only superhuman courage had enabled her to watch all the terrible incidents of the struggle.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSTANT WANDERER.

It is night. The moon shines and the stars glimmer in the midst of a serene but cheerless sky; the sharp whistlings of the north wind, that fatal, dry, and icy breeze,

ever and anon burst forth in violent gusts. With its harsh and cutting breath it sweeps Montmartre's heights. On the highest point of the hills a man is standing. His long shadow is cast upon the stony, moonlit ground. He gazes on the immense city, which lies outspread beneath his feet. Paris—with the dark outline of its towers, cupolas, domes, and steeples, standing out from the limpid blue of the horizon, while from the midst of the ocean of masonry rises a luminous vapor that reddens the starry azure of the sky. It is the distant reflection of the thousand fires which at night, the hour of pleasures, light up so joyously the noisy capital.

"No," said the wayfarer; "it is not to be. The Lord will not exact it. Is not *twice* enough?

"Five centuries ago, the avenging hand of the Almighty drove me hither from the uttermost confines of Asia. A solitary traveler, I had left behind me more grief, despair, disaster, and death than the innumerable armies of a hundred devastating conquerors. I entered this town, and it too was decimated.

"Again, two centuries ago, the inexorable hand, which leads me through the world, brought me once more hither; and

then, as the time before, the plague, which the Almighty attaches to my steps, again ravaged this city, and fell first on my brethren, already worn out with labor and misery.

"My brethren—mine? the cobbler of Jerusalem, the artisan accursed by the Lord, who, in my person, condemned the whole race of workmen, ever suffering, ever disinherited, ever in slavery, toiling on like me without rest or pause, without recompense or hope, till men, women, and children, young and old, all die beneath the same iron yoke—that murderous yoke, which others take in their turn, thus to be borne from age to age on the submissive and bruised shoulders of the masses.

"And now, for the third time in five centuries, I reach the summit of one of the hills that overlook the city. And perhaps I again bring with me fear, desolation, and death.

"Yet this city, intoxicated with the sounds of its joys and its nocturnal revelries, does not know—oh! does not know that *I* am at its gates.

"But no, no! my presence will not be a new calamity. The Lord, in His impenetrable views, has hitherto led me through France, so as to avoid the humblest ham-

let; and the sound of the funeral knell has not accompanied my passage.

"And, moreover, the specter has left me —the green, livid specter with its hollow, bloodshot eyes. When I touched the soil of France, its damp and icy hand was no longer clasped in mine—and it disappeared.

"And yet—I feel that the atmosphere of death is around me.

"The sharp whistlings of that fatal wind cease not, which, catching me in their whirl, seem to propagate blasting and mildew as they blow.

"But perhaps the wrath of the Lord is appeased, and my presence here is only a threat—to be communicated in some way to those whom it should intimidate.

"Yes; for otherwise He would smite with a fearful blow, by first scattering terror and death here in the heart of the country, in the bosom of this immense city!

"Oh! no, no! the Lord will be merciful. No! He will not condemn me to this new torture.

"Alas! in this city, my brethren are more numerous and miserable than elsewhere. And should I be their messenger of death?

"No! the Lord will have pity. For, alas! the seven descendants of my sister

have at length met in this town. And to them likewise should I be the messenger of death, instead of the help they so much need?

"For that woman, who, like me, wanders from one border of the earth to the other, after having once more rent asunder the nets of their enemies, has gone forth upon her endless journey.

"In vain she foresaw that new misfortunes threatened my sister's family. The invisible hand that drives me on, drives *her* on also.

"Carried away, as of old, by the irresistible whirlwind, at the moment of leaving my kindred to their fate, she in vain cried with supplicating tone: 'Let me at least, O Lord, complete my task!' 'GO ON!' 'A few days, in mercy, only a few poor days!' 'GO ON!' 'I leave those I love on the brink of the abyss!' 'GO ON! GO ON!'

"And the wandering star again started on its eternal round. And her voice, passing through space, called me to the assistance of mine own.

"When that voice reached me, I knew that the descendants of my sister were still exposed to frightful perils. Those perils are even now on the increase.

"Tell me, O Lord! will they escape the

scourge, which for so many centuries has weighed down our race?

"Wilt Thou pardon me in them? wilt Thou punish me in them? Oh, that they might obey the last will of their ancestor!

"Oh, that they might join together their noble intelligence and their great riches!

"They would then labor for the future happiness of humanity—they would thus, perhaps, redeem me from my eternal punishment!

"The words of the Son of Man, LOVE YE ONE ANOTHER, will be their only end, their only means.

"By the help of those all-powerful words they will fight and conquer the false priests, who have renounced the precepts of love, peace, and hope, for lessons of hatred, violence, and despair.

"Those false priests, who, kept in pay by the powerful and happy of this world, their accomplices in every age, instead of asking here below for some slight share of well-being for my unfortunate brethren, dare in Thy name, O Lord God, to assert that the poor are condemned to endless suffering in this world—and that the desire or the hope to suffer less is a crime in Thine eyes—because the happiness of the few, and the misery of nearly the whole human

race, is (oh, blasphemy!) according to Thy will. Is not the very contrary of those murderous words alone worthy of divinity?

"In mercy, hear me, Lord! Rescue from their enemies the descendants of my sister—the artisan as the king's son. Do not let them destroy the germ of so mighty and fruitful an association, which, with Thy blessing, would make an epoch in the annals of human happiness!

"Let me unite them, O Lord, since others would divide them—defend, since others attack; let me give hope to those who have ceased to hope, courage to those who are brought low with fear—let me raise up the falling, and sustain those who persevere in the way of the righteous!

"And, peradventure, their struggles, devotion, virtue, and grief, may expiate my fault—that of a man whom misfortune alone rendered unjust and wicked.

"Oh! since Thy Almighty hand hath led me hither—to what end I know not—lay aside Thy wrath; I beseech Thee—let me be no longer the instrument of Thy vengeance!

"Enough of woe upon the earth! for the last two years, Thy creatures have fallen by thousands upon my track. The world

is decimated. A veil of mourning extends over all the globe.

"From Asia to the icy pole, they died upon the path of the wanderer. Dost Thou not hear the long-drawn sigh that rises from the earth unto Thee, O Lord?

"Mercy for all! mercy for me! Let me but unite the descendants of my sister for a single day, and they will be saved!"

As he pronounced these words, the wayfarer sunk upon his knees and raised to Heaven his supplicating hands. Suddenly, the wind blew with redoubled violence; its sharp whistlings were changed into the roar of a tempest.

The traveler shuddered; in a voice of terror he exclaimed: "The blast of death rises in its fury—the whirlwind carries me on—Lord! Thou art then deaf to my prayer?

"The specter! oh, the specter! it is again here! its green face twitching with convulsive spasms—its red eyes rolling in their orbits. Begone! begone! its hand, oh! its icy hand has again laid hold of mine. Have mercy, Heaven!"

"Go on!"

"O Lord! the pestilence — the terrible plague—must I carry it into this city? And my brethren will perish the first—

they, who are so sorely smitten even now! Mercy!"

"Go on!"

"And the descendants of my sister. Mercy! Mercy!"

"Go on!"

"O Lord, have pity! I can no longer keep my ground; the specter drags me to the slope of the hill; my walk is rapid as the deadly blast that races behind me; already do I behold the city gates. Have mercy, Lord, on the descendants of my sister! Spare them: do not make me their executioner; let them triumph over their enemies!"

"Go on! Go on!"

"The ground flies beneath my feet; there is the city gate. Lord, it is yet time? Oh, mercy for that sleeping town! Let it not waken to cries of terror, despair, and death! Lord, I am on the threshold. Must it be? Yes, it is done. Paris, the plague is in thy bosom. The curse—oh, the eternal curse!"

"Go on! Go on! Go on!"

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LUNCHEON.

THE morning after the doomed traveler, descending the heights of Montmartre, had entered the walls of Paris, great activity reigned in Saint-Dizier House. Though it was hardly noon, the Princess of Saint-Dizier, without being exactly in full dress (she had too much taste for that), was yet arrayed with more care than usual. Her light hair, instead of being merely banded, was arranged in two bunches of curls, which suited very well with her full and florid cheeks. Her cap was trimmed with bright rose-colored ribbon, and who ever had seen the lady in her tight-fitting dress of gray watered silk would have easily guessed that Mrs. Grivois, her tire woman, must have required the assistance and the efforts of another of the princess's women to achieve so remarkable a reduction in the ample figure of their mistress.

We shall explain the edifying cause of this partial return to the vanities of the

world. The princess, attended by Mrs. Grivois, who acted as housekeeper, was giving her final orders with regard to some preparations that were going on in a vast parlor. In the midst of this room was a large round table, covered with crimson velvet, and near it stood several chairs, among which, in the place of honor, was an arm-chair of gilded wood. In one corner, not far from the chimney, in which burned an excellent fire, was a buffet. On it were the divers materials for a most dainty and exquisite collation. Upon silver dishes were piled pyramids of sandwiches, composed of the roes of carp and anchovy paste, with slices of pickled tunny-fish and Lenigord truffles (it was in Lent); on silver dishes, placed over burning spirits of wine so as to keep them very hot, tails of Meuse crawfish boiled in cream, smoked in golden-colored pastry, and seemed to challenge comparison with delicious little Marennes oyster patties, stewed in Madeira, and flavored with a seasoning of spiced sturgeon. By the side of these substantial dishes were some of a lighter character, such as pineapple tarts, strawberry-creams (it was early for such fruit), and orange jelly served in the peel, which had been artistically emptied for that purpose. Bor-

deaux, Madeira, and Alicant sparkled like rubies and topazes in large glass decanters, while two Sevres ewers were filled, one with coffee *a la creme*, the other with vanilla chocolate, almost in the state of sherbet, from being plunged in a large cooler of chiseled silver, containing ice.

But what gave to this dainty collation a singularly apostolic and papal character were sundry symbols of religious worship carefully represented. Thus there were charming little Calvaries in apricot paste, sacerdotal miters in burned almonds, episcopal croziers in sweet cake, to which the princess added, as a mark of delicate attention, a little cardinal's hat in cherry sweetmeat, ornamented with bands in burned sugar. The most important, however, of these Catholic delicacies, the masterpiece of the cook, was a superb crucifix in angelica, with a crown of candied berries. These are strange profanations, which scandalize even the least devout. But, from the impudent juggle of the coat of Triers, down to the shameless jest of the shrine at Argenteuil, people, who are pious after the fashion of the princess, seem to take delight in bringing ridicule upon the most respectable traditions.

After glancing with an air of satisfac-

tion at these preparations for the collation, the lady said to Mrs. Grivois, as she pointed to the gilded arm-chair, which seemed destined for the president of the meeting: "Is there a cushion under the table for his Eminence to rest his feet on? He always complains of cold."

"Yes, your highness," said Mrs. Grivois, when she had looked under the table; "the cushion is there."

"Let also a pewter bottle be filled with boiling water, in case his Eminence should not find the cushion enough to keep his feet warm."

"Yes, my lady."

"And put some more wood on the fire."

"But, my lady, it is already a very furnace. And if his Eminence is always too cold, my lord the Bishop of Halfagen is always too hot. He perspires dreadfully."

The princess shrugged her shoulders, and said to Mrs. Grivois: "Is not his Eminence Cardinal Malipieri the superior of his Lordship the Bishop of Halfagen?"

"Yes, your highness."

"Then, according to the rules of the hierarchy, it is for his Lordship to suffer from the heat, rather than his Eminence from the cold. Therefore, do as I tell

you, and put more wood on the fire. Nothing is more natural; his Eminence being an Italian, and his Lordship coming from the north of Belgium, they are accustomed to different temperatures."

"Just as your highness pleases," said Mrs. Grivois, as she placed two enormous logs on the fire; "but in such a heat as there is here his Lordship might really be suffocated."

"I also find it too warm; but does not our holy religion teach us lessons of self-sacrifice and mortification?" said the princess, with a touching expression of devotion.

We have now explained the cause of the rather gay attire of the princess. She was preparing for a reception of prelates, who, along with Father d'Aigrigny and other dignitaries of the Church, had already held at the princely house a sort of council on a small scale. A young bride who gives her first ball, an emancipated minor who gives his first bachelor's dinner, a woman of talent who reads aloud for the first time her first unpublished work, are not more joyous and proud, and, at the same time, more attentive to their guests, than was this lady with her prelates. To behold great interests discussed in her

house, and in her presence, to hear men of acknowledged ability ask her advice upon certain practical matters relating to the influence of female congregations, filled the princess with pride, as her claims to consideration were thus sanctioned by Lordships and Eminences, and she took the position, as it were, of a mother of the Church. Therefore, to win these prelates, whether native or foreign, she had recourse to no end of saintly flatteries and sanctified coaxing. Nor could anything be more logical than these successive transfigurations of this heartless woman, who only loved sincerely and passionately the pursuit of intrigue and domination. With the progress of age, she passed naturally from the intrigues of love to those of politics, and from the latter to those of religion.

At the moment she finished inspecting her preparations, the sound of coaches was heard in the courtyard, apprising her of the arrival of the persons she had been expecting. Doubtless, these persons were of the highest rank, for, contrary to all custom, she went to receive them at the door of her outer saloon. It was, indeed, Cardinal Malipieri, who was always cold, with the Belgian Bishop of Halfagen, who was always hot. They were accompanied by

Father d'Aigrigny. The Roman cardinal was a tall man, rather bony than thin, with a yellowish puffy countenance, haughty and full of craft; he squinted a good deal, and his black eyes were surrounded by a deep brown circle. The Belgian Bishop was short, thick, and fat, with a prominent abdomen, and apoplectic complexion, a slow, deliberate look, and a soft, dimpled, delicate hand.

The company soon assembled in the great saloon. The cardinal instantly crept close to the fire, while the bishop, beginning to sweat and blow, cast longing glances at the iced chocolate and coffee, which were to aid him in sustaining the oppressive heat of the artificial dog-day. Father d'Aigrigny, approaching the princess, said to her in a low voice: "Will you give orders for the admittance of the Abbe Gabriel de Rennepont, when he arrives?"

"Is that young priest then here?" asked the princess, with extreme surprise.

"Since the day before yesterday. We had him sent for to Paris by his superiors. You shall know all. As for Father Rodin, let Mrs. Grivois admit him, as the other day, by the little door of the back-stairs."

"He will come to-day."

"He has very important matters to com-

municate. He desired that both the cardinal and the bishop should be present, for they have been informed of everything at Rome by the Superior General, in their quality of associates."

The princess rang the bell, gave the necessary orders, and, returning toward the cardinal, said to him, in a tone of the most earnest solicitude: "Does your Eminence begin to feel a little warmer? Would your Eminence like a bottle of hot water to your feet? Shall we make a larger fire for your Eminence?"

At this proposition, the Belgian Bishop, who was wiping the perspiration from his forehead, heaved a despairing sigh.

"A thousand thanks, princess," answered the cardinal to her, in very good French, but with an intolerable Italian accent; "I am really overcome with so much kindness."

"Will not your Lordship take some refreshment?" said the princess to the bishop, as she turned toward the sideboard.

"With your permission, madame, I will take a little iced coffee," said the prelate, making a prudent circuit to approach the dishes without passing before the fire.

"And will not your Eminence try one

of these little oyster-patties? They are quite hot," said the princess.

"I know them already, princess," said the cardinal, with the air and look of an epicure; "they are delicious, and I cannot resist the temptation."

"What wine shall I have the honor to offer your Eminence?" resumed the princess, graciously.

"A little claret, if you please, madame;" and as Father d'Aigrigny prepared to fill the cardinal's glass, the princess disputed with him that pleasure.

"Your Eminence will doubtless approve what I have done," said Father d'Aigrigny to the cardinal, while the latter was gravely dispatching the oyster-patties, "in not summoning for to-day the Bishop of Mogador, the Archbishop of Nanterre, and our holy Mother Perpetue, the lady superior of St. Marie Convent, the interview we are about to have with his Reverence Father Rodin and the Abbe Gabriel being altogether private and confidential."

"Our good father was perfectly right," said the cardinal; "for, though the possible consequences of this Rennepont affair may interest the whole Church, there are some things that are as well kept secret."

"Then I must seize this opportunity to

thank your Eminence for having deigned to make an exception in favor of a very obscure and humble servant of the Church," said the princess to the cardinal, with a very deep and respectful courtesy.

"It is only just and right, madame," replied the cardinal, bowing, as he replaced his empty glass upon the table; "we know how much the Church is indebted to you for the salutary direction you give to the religious institutions of which you are the patroness."

"With regard to that, your Eminence may be assured that I always refuse assistance to any poor person who cannot produce a certificate from the confessional."

"And it is only thus, madame," resumed the cardinal, this time allowing himself to be tempted by the attractions of the craw fish's tails, "it is only thus that charity has any meaning. I care little that the irreligious should feel hunger, but with the pious it is different;" and the prelate gayly swallowed a mouthful. "Moreover," resumed he, "it is well known with what ardent zeal you pursue the impious, and those who are rebels against the authority of our Holy Father."

"Your Eminence may feel convinced that I am *Roman* in heart and soul; I

see no difference between a Gallican and a Turk," said the princess, bravely.

"The princess is right," said the Belgian Bishop; "I will go further, and assert that a Gallican should be more odious to the Church than a pagan. In this respect I am of the opinion of Louis XIV. They asked him a favor for a man about the court. 'Never,' said the great king; 'this person is a Jansenist.'—'No, sire; he is an atheist!'—'Oh! that is different; I will grant what he asks,' said the king."

This little episcopal jest made them all laugh. After which Father d'Aigrigny resumed seriously, addressing the cardinal: "Unfortunately, as I was about to observe to your Eminence with regard to the Abbe Gabriel, unless they are very narrowly watched, the lower clergy have a tendency to become infected with dissenting views, and with ideas of rebellion against what they call the despotism of the bishops."

"This young man must be a Catholic Luther!" said the bishop. And, walking on tiptoe, he went to pour himself out a glorious glass of Madeira, in which he soaked some sweet cake, made in the form of a crozier.

Led by his example, the cardinal, under

pretense of warming his feet by drawing still closer to the fire, helped himself to an excellent glass of old Malaga, which he swallowed by mouthfuls, with an air of profound meditation; after which he resumed: "So this Abbe Gabriel starts as a reformer. He must be an ambitious man. Is he dangerous?"

"By our advice his superiors have judged him to be so. They have ordered him to come hither. He will soon be here, and I will tell your Eminence why I have sent for him. But first, I have a note on the dangerous tendencies of the Abbe Gabriel. Certain questions were addressed to him, with regard to some of his acts, and it was in consequence of his answers that his superiors recalled him."

So saying, Father d'Aigrigny took from his pocketbook a paper, which he read as follows:

"'*Question.*—Is it true that you performed religious rites for an inhabitant of your parish who died in final impenitence of the most detestable kind, since he had committed suicide?'

"'*Answer of Abbe Gabriel.*—I paid him the last duties, because, more than any one else, because of his guilty end, he required the prayers of the Church. Dur-

ing the night which followed his interment I continually implored for him the divine mercy.'

"'*Q.*—Is it true that you refused a set of silver-gilt sacramental vessels, and other ornaments, with which one of the faithful, in pious zeal, wished to endow your parish?'

"'*A.*—I refused the vessels and embellishments, because the house of the Lord should be plain and without ornament, so as to remind the faithful that the divine Saviour was born in a stable. I advised the person who wished to make these useless presents to my parish to employ the money in judicious almsgiving, assuring him it would be more agreeable to the Lord.'"

"What a bitter and violent declamation against the adorning of our temples!" cried the cardinal. "This young priest is most dangerous. Continue, my good father."

And, in his indignation, his Eminence swallowed several mouthfuls of strawberry-cream. Father d'Aigrigny continued:

"'*Q.*—Is it true that you received in your parsonage, and kept there for some days, an inhabitant of the village, by birth a Swiss, belonging to the Protestant communion? Is it true that not only you did

not attempt to convert him to the one Catholic and Apostolic faith, but that you carried so far the neglect of your sacred duties as to inter this heretic in the ground consecrated for the repose of true believers?'

"'*A.*—One of my brethren was houseless. His life had been honest and laborious. In his old age his strength had failed him, and sickness had come at the back of it; almost in a dying state, he had been driven from his humble dwelling by a pitiless landlord, to whom he owed a year's rent. I received the old man in my house, and soothed his last days. The poor creature had toiled and suffered all his life; dying, he uttered no word of bitterness at his hard fate; he recommended his soul to God, and piously kissed the crucifix. His pure and simple spirit returned to the bosom of its Creator. I closed his eyes with respect, I buried him, I prayed for him; and, though he died in the Protestant faith, I thought him worthy of a place in consecrated ground.'"

"Worse and worse!" said the cardinal. "This tolerance is monstrous. It is a horrible attack on that maxim of Catholicism: 'Out of the pale of the Church there is no salvation.'"

"And all this is the more serious, my lord," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, "because the mildness, charity, and Christian devotion of Abbe Gabriel have excited, not only in his parish, but in all the surrounding districts, the greatest enthusiasm. The priests of the neighboring parishes have yielded to the general impulse, and it must be confessed that but for his moderation a wide-spread schism would have commenced."

"But what do you hope will result from bringing him here?" said the prelate.

"The position of Abbe Gabriel is complicated; first of all, he is the heir of the Rennepont family."

"But has he not ceded his rights?" asked the cardinal.

"Yes, my lord; and this cession, which was at first informal, has lately, with his free consent, been made perfectly regular in law; for he had sworn, happen what might, to renounce his part of the inheritance in favor of the Society of Jesus. Nevertheless, his Reverence Father Rodin thinks, that if your Eminence, after explaining to Abbe Gabriel that he was about to be recalled by his superiors, were to propose to him some eminent position at Rome, he might be induced to leave France, and

we might succeed in arousing within him those sentiments of ambition which are doubtless only sleeping for the present; your Eminence having observed, very judiciously, that every reformer must be ambitious."

"I approve of this idea," said the cardinal, after a moment's reflection, "with his merit and power of acting on other men, Abbe Gabriel may rise very high, if he is docile; and if he should not be so, it is better for the safety of the Church that he should be at Rome than here—for you know, my good father, we have securities that are unfortunately wanting in France." *

After some moments of silence, the cardinal said suddenly to Father d'Aigrigny: "As we were talking of Father Rodin, tell me frankly what you think of him."

"Your Eminence knows his capacity," said Father d'Aigrigny, with a constrained and suspicious air; "our reverend Father-General—"

"Commissioned him to take your place," said the cardinal; "I know that. He told me so at Rome. But what do you think

* It is known that, in 1845, the Inquisition, solitary confinement, etc., still existed at Rome.

of the character of Father Rodin? Can one have full confidence in him?"

"He has so complete, so original, so secret, and so impenetrable a mind," said Father d'Aigrigny, with hesitation, "that it is difficult to form any certain judgment with respect to him."

"Do you think him ambitious?" said the cardinal, after another moment's pause. "Do you not suppose him capable of having other views than those of the greater glory of his Order? Come, I have reasons for speaking thus," added the prelate, with emphasis.

"Why," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, not without suspicion, for the game is played cautiously between people of the same craft, "what should your Eminence think of him, either from your own observation, or from the report of the Father-General?"

"I think—that if his apparent devotion to his Order really concealed some afterthought—it would be well to discover it—for, with the influence that he has obtained at Rome (as I have found out), he might one day, and that shortly, become very formidable."

"Well!" cried Father d'Aigrigny, impelled by his jealousy of Rodin; "I am, in

this respect, of the same opinion as your Eminence; for I have sometimes perceived in him flashes of ambition that were as alarming as they were extraordinary—and since I must tell all to your Eminence—"

Father d'Aigrigny was unable to continue; at this moment Mrs. Grivois, who had been knocking at the door, half-opened it, and made a sign to her mistress. The princess answered by bowing her head, and Mrs. Grivois again withdrew. A second afterward Rodin entered the room.

CHAPTER XVII.

RENDERING THE ACCOUNT.

At sight of Rodin, the two prelates and Father d'Aigrigny rose spontaneously, so much were they overawed by the real superiority of this man; their faces, just before contracted with suspicion and jealousy, suddenly brightened up, and seemed to smile on the reverend father with affectionate deference. The princess advanced some steps to meet him.

Rodin, badly dressed as ever, leaving on the soft carpet the muddy track of his

clumsy shoes, put his umbrella into one corner, and advanced toward the table—not with his accustomed humility, but with slow step, uplifted head, and steady glance; not only did he feel himself in the midst of his partisans, but he knew that he could rule them all by the power of his intellect.

"We were speaking of your reverence, my dear, good father," said the cardinal, with charming affability.

"Ah!" said Rodin, looking fixedly at the prelate; "and what were you saying?"

"Why," replied the Belgian Bishop, wiping his forehead, "all the good that can be said of your reverence."

"Will you not take something, my good father?" said the princess to Rodin, as she pointed to the splendid sideboard.

"Thank you, madame, I have eaten my radish already this morning."

"My secretary, Abbe Berlini, who was present at your repast, was, indeed, much astonished at your reverence's frugality," said the prelate; "it is worthy of an anchorite."

"Suppose we talk of business," said Rodin, abruptly, like a man accustomed to lead and control the discussion.

"We shall always be most happy to hear you," said the prelate. "Your reverence

yourself fixed to-day to talk over this great Rennepont affair. It is of such importance that it was partly the cause of my journey to France; for to support the interests of the glorious Company of Jesus, with which I have the honor of being associated, is to support the interests of Rome itself, and I promised the reverend Father-General that I would place myself entirely at your orders."

"I can only repeat what his Eminence has just said," added the bishop. "We set out from Rome together, and our ideas are just the same."

"Certainly," said Rodin, addressing the cardinal, "your Eminence may serve our cause, and that materially. I will tell you how presently."

Then, addressing the princess, he continued: "I have desired Dr. Baleinier to come here, madame, for it will be well to inform him of certain things."

"He will be admitted, as usual," said the princess.

Since Rodin's arrival Father d'Aigrigny had remained silent; he seemed occupied with bitter thoughts, and with some violent internal struggle. At last, half rising, he said to the prelate, in a forced tone of voice: "I will not ask your Eminence

to judge between the Reverend Father Rodin and myself. Our general has pronounced, and I have obeyed. But, as your Eminence will soon see our superior, I should wish that you would grant me the favor to report faithfully the answers of Father Rodin to one or two questions I am about to put to him."

The prelate bowed. Rodin looked at Father d'Aigrigny with an air of surprise, and said to him, dryly: "The thing is decided. What is the use of questions?"

"Not to justify myself," answered Father d'Aigrigny, "but to place matters in their true light before his Eminence."

"Speak, then; but let us have no useless speeches," said Rodin, drawing out his large silver watch and looking at it. "By two o'clock I must be at Saint-Sulpice."

"I will be as brief as possible," said Father d'Aigrigny, with repressed resentment. Then, addressing Rodin, he resumed: "When your reverence thought fit to take my place, and to blame, very severely perhaps, the manner in which I had managed the interests confided to my care, I confess honestly that these interests were gravely compromised."

"Compromised?" said Rodin, ironically; "you mean lost. Did you not order me to

write to Rome, to bid them renounce all hope?"

"That is true," said Father d'Aigrigny.

"It was then a desperate case, given up by the best doctors," continued Rodin, with irony; "and yet I have undertaken to restore it to life. Go on." And plunging both hands into the pockets of his trousers, he looked Father d'Aigrigny full in the face.

"Your reverence blamed me harshly," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, "not for having sought, by every possible means, to recover the property odiously diverted from our Society—"

"All your casuists authorize you to do so," said the cardinal; "the texts are clear and positive; you have a right to recover, *per fas aut nefas*, what has been treacherously taken from you."

"And, therefore," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, "Father Rodin only reproached me with the military roughness of my means. 'Their violence,' he said, 'was in dangerous opposition to the manners of the age.' Be it so; but, first of all, I could not be exposed to any legal proceedings, and, but for one fatal circumstance, success would have crowned the course I had taken, however rough and brutal it may ap

pear. Now, may I ask your reverence, what—"

"What I have done more than you?" said Rodin to Father d'Aigrigny, giving way to his impertinent habit of interrupting people; "what I have done better than you?—what step I have taken in the Rennepont affair, since I received it from you in a desperate condition? Is that what you wish to know?"

"Precisely," said Father d'Aigrigny, dryly.

"Well, I confess," resumed Rodin, in a sardonic tone, "just as you did great things, coarse things, turbulent things, I have been doing little, puerile, secret things. Oh, heaven! you cannot imagine what a foolish part I, who passed for a man of enlarged views, have been acting for the last six weeks."

"I should never have allowed myself to address such a reproach to your reverence, however deserved it may appear," said Father d'Aigrigny, with a bitter smile.

"A reproach?" said Rodin, shrugging his shoulders; "a reproach? You shall be the judge. Do you know what I wrote about you, some six weeks ago? Here it is: 'Father d'Aigrigny has excellent qualities. He will be of much service to me'—

and from to-morrow I shall employ you very actively," added Rodin, by way of parenthesis—" 'but he is not great enough to know how to make himself little on occasion.' Do you understand?"

"Not very well," said Father d'Aigrigny, blushing.

"So much the worse for you," answered Rodin; "it only proves that I was right. Well, since I must tell you, I have been wise enough to play the most foolish part for six whole weeks. Yes, I have chatted nonsense with a grisette—have talked of liberty, progress, humanity, emancipation of woman, with a young, excited girl; of Napoleon the Great, and all sorts of Bonapartist idolatry, with an old, imbecile soldier; of imperial glory, humiliation of France, hopes in the King of Rome, with a certain Marshal of France, who, with a heart full of adoration for the robber of thrones, that was transported to Saint Helena, has a head as hollow and sonorous as a trumpet, into which you have only to blow some warlike or patriotic notes and it will flourish away of itself, without knowing why or how. More than all this, I have talked of love affairs with a young tiger. When I told you it was lamentable to see a man of any intelligence descend,

as I have done, to all such petty ways of connecting the thousand threads of this dark web, was I not right? Is it not a fine spectacle to see the spider obstinately weaving its net?—to see the ugly little black animal crossing thread upon thread, fastening it here, strengthening it there, and again lengthening it in some other place? You shrug your shoulders in pity; but return two hours after—what will you find? The little black animal eating its fill, and in its web a dozen of the foolish flies, bound so securely that the little black animal has only to choose the moment of its repast."

As he uttered these words, Rodin smiled strangely; his eyes, gradually half closed, opened to their full width, and seemed to shine more than usual. The Jesuit felt a sort of feverish excitement, which he attributed to the contest in which he had engaged before these eminent personages, who already felt the influence of his original and cutting speech.

Father d'Aigrigny began to regret having entered on the contest. He resumed, however, with ill-repressed irony: "I do not dispute the smallness of your means. I agree with you, they are very puerile—they are even very vulgar. But that is not quite sufficient to give an exalted no-

TRANSFORMATION OF RODIN.

—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4, p. 384.

tion of your merit. May I be allowed to ask—"

"What these means have produced?" resumed Rodin, with an excitement that was not usual with him. "Look into my spider's web, and you will see there the beautiful and insolent young girl, so proud, six weeks ago, of her grace, mind, and audacity — now pale, trembling, mortally wounded at the heart."

"But the act of chivalrous intrepidity of the Indian prince, with which all Paris is ringing," said the princess, "must surely have touched Mdlle. de Cardoville."

"Yes; but I have paralyzed the effect of that stupid and savage devotion, by demonstrating to the young lady that it is not sufficient to kill black panthers to prove one's self a susceptible, delicate, and faithful lover."

"Be it so," said Father d'Aigrigny; "we will admit the fact that Mdlle. de Cardoville is wounded to the heart."

"But what does this prove with regard to the Rennepont affair?" asked the cardinal, with curiosity, as he leaned his elbows on the table.

"There results from it," said Rodin, "that, when our most dangerous enemy is mortally wounded, she abandons the bat-

tle-field. That is something, I should imagine."

"Indeed," said the princess, "the talents and audacity of Mdlle. de Cardoville would make her the soul of the coalition formed against us."

"Be it so," replied Father d'Aigrigny, obstinately; "she may be no longer formidable in that respect. But the wound in her heart will not prevent her from inheriting."

"Who tells you so?" asked Rodin coldly, and with assurance. "Do you know why I have taken such pains, first to bring her in contact with Djalma, and then to separate her from him?"

"That is what I ask you," said Father d'Aigrigny; "how can this storm of passion prevent Mdlle. de Cardoville and the prince from inheriting?"

"Is it from the serene or from the stormy sky that darts the destroying thunderbolt?" said Rodin, disdainfully. "Be satisfied; I shall know where to place the conductor. As for M. Hardy, the man lived for three things, his workmen, his friend, his mistress. He has been thrice wounded in the heart. I always take aim at the heart; it is legal and sure."

"It is legal, and sure, and praiseworthy,"

said the bishop; "for, if I understand you rightly, this manufacturer had a concubine; now, it is well to make use of an evil passion for the punishment of the wicked."

"True, quite true," added the cardinal; "if they have evil passions for us to make use of, it is their own fault."

"Our Holy Mother Perpetue," said the princess, "took every means to discover this abominable adultery."

"Well, then, M. Hardy is wounded in his dearest affections, I admit," said Father d'Aigrigny, still disputing every inch of ground; "ruined too in his fortune, which will only make him the more eager after this inheritance."

The argument appeared of weight to the two prelates and the princess; all looked at Rodin with anxious curiosity. Instead of answering, he walked up to the sideboard, and, contrary to his habits of stoical sobriety, and in spite of his repugnance for wine, he examined the decanters and said: "What is there in them?"

"Claret and sherry," said the hostess, much astonished at the sudden taste of Rodin, "and—"

The latter took a decanter at hazard, and poured out a glass of Madeira, which he drank off at a draught. Just before,

he had felt a strange kind of shivering; to this had succeeded a sort of weakness. He hoped the wine would revive him.

After wiping his mouth with the back of his dirty hand, he returned to the table and said to Father d'Aigrigny: "What did you tell me about M. Hardy?"

"That, being ruined in fortune, he would be the more eager to obtain this immense inheritance," answered Father d'Aigrigny, inwardly much offended at the imperious tone.

"M. Hardy think of money?" said Rodin, shrugging his shoulders. "He is indifferent to life, plunged in a stupor, from which he only starts to burst into tears. Then he speaks with mechanical kindness to those about him. I have placed him in good hands. He begins, however, to be sensible to the attentions shown him, for he is good, excellent, weak; and it is to this excellence, Father d'Aigrigny, that you must appeal to finish the work in hand."

"I?" said Father d'Aigrigny, much surprised.

"Yes; and then you will find that the result I have obtained is considerable, and—"

Rodin paused, and, pressing his hand

to his forehead, said to himself: "It is strange!"

"What is the matter?" said the princess, with interest.

"Nothing, madame," answered Rodin, with a shiver; "it is doubtless the wine I drank; I am not accustomed to it. I feel a slight headache; but it will pass."

"Your eyes are very bloodshot, my good father," said the princess.

"I have looked too closely into my web," answered the Jesuit, with a sinister smile; "and I must look again, to make Father d'Aigrigny, who pretends to be blind, catch a glimpse of my other flies. The two daughters of Marshal Simon, for instance, growing sadder and more dejected every day, at the icy barrier raised between them and their father; and the latter thinking himself one day dishonored, if he does this, another if he does that; so that the hero of the Empire has become weaker and more irresolute than a child. What more remains of this impious family? Jacques Rennepont? Ask Morok to what a state of debasement intemperance has reduced him, and toward what an abyss he is rushing! There is my occurrence-sheet; you see to what are reduced all the members of this family who, six weeks ago, had

each elements of strength and union! Behold these Renneponts, who, by the will of their heretical ancestor, were to unite their forces to combat and crush our Society! There was good reason to fear them; but what did I say? That I would act upon their passions. What have I done? I have acted upon their passions. At this hour they are vainly struggling in my web —they are mine—they are mine—"

As he was speaking, Rodin's countenance and voice had undergone a singular alteration; his complexion, generally so cadaverous, had become flushed, but unequally, and in patches; then, strange phenomenon! his eyes grew both more brilliant and more sunken, and his voice sharper and louder. The change in the countenance of Rodin, of which he did not appear to be conscious, was so remarkable that the other actors in this scene looked at him with a sort of terror.

Deceived as to the cause of this impression, Rodin exclaimed with indignation, in a voice interrupted by deep gaspings for breath: "Is it pity for this impious race that I read upon your faces? Pity for the young girl, who never enters a church, and erects pagan altars in her habitation? Pity for Hardy, the sentimental blas-

phemer, the philanthropic atheist, who had no chapel in his factory, and dared to blend the names of Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, and Plato, with our Saviour's? Pity for the Indian worshiper of Brahma? Pity for the two sisters, who have never even been baptized? Pity for that brute, Jacques Rennepont? Pity for the stupid imperial soldier, who has Napoleon for his god and the bulletins of the Grand Army for his gospel? Pity for this family of renegades, whose ancestor, a relapsed heretic, not content with robbing us of our property, excites from his tomb, at the end of a century and a half, his cursed race to lift their heads against us? What! to defend ourselves from these vipers we shall not have the right to crush them in their own venom? I tell you, that it is to serve Heaven, and to give a salutary example to the world, to devote, by unchaining their own passions, this impious family to grief and despair and death!"

As he spoke thus, Rodin was dreadful in his ferocity; the fire of his eyes became still more brilliant; his lips were dry and burning, a cold sweat bathed his temples, which could be seen throbbing; an icy shudder ran through his frame. Attributing these symptoms to fatigue from writ-

ing through a portion of the night, and wishing to avoid fainting, he went to the sideboard, filled another glass with wine, which he drank off at a draught, and returned as the cardinal said to him: "If your course with regard to this family needed justification, my good father, your last word would have victoriously justified it. Not only are you right, according to your own casuists, but there is nothing in your proceedings contrary to human laws. As for the divine law, it is pleasing to the Lord to destroy impiety with its own weapons."

Conquered, as well as the others, by Rodin's diabolical assurance, and brought back to a kind of fearful admiration, Father d'Aigrigny said to him: "I confess I was wrong in doubting the judgment of your reverence. Deceived by the appearance of the means employed, I could not judge of their connection, and above all, of their results. I now see, that, thanks to you, success is no longer doubtful."

"This is an exaggeration," replied Rodin, with feverish impatience; "all these passions are at work, but the moment is critical. As the alchemist bends over the crucible, which may give him either treas-

ures or sudden death—I alone at this moment—"

Rodin did not finish the sentence. He pressed both his hands to his forehead, with a stifled cry of pain.

"What is the matter?" said Father d'Aigrigny. "For some moments you have been growing fearfully pale."

"I do not know what is the matter," said Rodin, in an altered voice; "my headache increases—I am seized with a sort of giddiness."

"Sit down," said the princess, with interest.

"Take something," said the bishop.

"It will be nothing," said Rodin, with an effort; "I am no milksop, thank Heaven! I had little sleep last night; it is fatigue—nothing more. I was saying that I alone could now direct this affair; but I cannot execute the plan myself. I must keep out of the way, and watch in the shade; I must hold the threads, which I alone can manage," added Rodin, in a faint voice.

"My good father," said the cardinal uneasily, "I assure you that you are very unwell. Your paleness is becoming livid."

"It is possible," answered Rodin, courageously; "but I am not to be so soon con-

quered. To return to our affair—this is the time in which your qualities, Father d'Aigrigny, will turn to good account. I have never denied them, and they may now be of the greatest use. You have the power of charming—grace—eloquence—you must—"

Rodin paused again. A cold sweat poured from his forehead. He felt his legs give way under him, notwithstanding his obstinate energy.

"I confess I am not well," he said; "yet, this morning, I was as well as ever. I shiver. I am icy cold."

"Draw near the fire—it is a sudden indisposition," said the bishop, offering his arm with heroic devotion; "it will not be anything of consequence."

"If you were to take something warm, a cup of tea," said the princess; "Dr. Baleinier will be here directly—he will reassure us as to this—indisposition."

"It is really inexplicable," said the prelate.

At these words of the cardinal, Rodin, who had advanced with difficulty toward the fire, turned his eyes upon the prelate, and looked at him fixedly in a strange manner, for about a second; then, strong

in his unconquerable energy, notwithstanding the change in his features, which were now visibly disfigured, Rodin said, in a broken voice, which he tried to make firm: "The fire has warmed me; it will be nothing. I have no time to coddle myself. It would be a pretty thing to fall ill just as the Rennepont affair can only succeed by my exertions! Let us return to business. I told you, Father d'Aigrigny, that you might serve us a good deal; and you also, princess, who have espoused this cause as if it were your own—"

Rodin again paused. This time he uttered a piercing cry, sunk upon a chair placed near him, and, throwing himself back convulsively, he pressed his hands to his chest, and exclaimed: "Oh! what pain!"

Then (dreadful sight!) a cadaverous decomposition, rapid as thought, took place in Rodin's features. His hollow eyes were filled with blood, and seemed to shrink back in their orbits, which formed, as it were, two dark holes, in the center of which blazed points of fire; nervous convulsions drew the flabby, damp, and icy skin tight over the bony prominences of the face, which was becoming rapidly green. From the lips, writhing with pain, issued

the struggling breath, mingled with the words: "Oh! I suffer! I burn!"

Then, yielding to a transport of fury, Rodin tore with his nails his naked chest, for he had twisted off the buttons of his waistcoat, and rent his black and filthy shirt front, as if the pressure of those garments augmented the violence of the pain under which he was writhing. The bishop, the cardinal, and Father d'Aigrigny, hastily approached Rodin, to try and hold him; he was seized with horrible convulsions; but, suddenly, collecting all his strength, he rose upon his feet stiff as a corpse. Then, with his garments in disorder, his thin, gray hair standing up all around his greenish face, fixing his red and flaming eyes upon the cardinal, he seized him with convulsive grasp, and exclaimed in a terrible voice, half stifled in his throat: "Cardinal Malipieri—this illness is too sudden —they suspect me at Rome—you are of the race of the Borgias—and your secretary was with me this morning!"

"Unhappy man! what does he dare insinuate?" cried the prelate, as amazed as he was indignant at the accusation. So saying, the cardinal strove to free himself from the grasp of Rodin, whose fingers were now as stiff as iron.

"I am poisoned!" muttered Rodin, and sinking back, he fell into the arms of Father d'Aigrigny.

Notwithstanding his alarm, the cardinal had time to whisper to the latter: "He thinks himself poisoned. He must therefore be plotting something very dangerous."

The door of the room opened. It was Dr. Baleinier.

"Oh, doctor!" cried the princess, as she ran pale and frightened toward him; "Father Rodin has been suddenly attacked with terrible convulsions. Quick! quick!"

"Convulsions? oh! it will be nothing, madame," said the doctor, throwing down his hat upon a chair and hastily approaching the group which surrounded the sick man.

"Here is the doctor!" cried the princess. All stepped aside, except Father d'Aigrigny, who continued to support Rodin, leaning against a chair.

"Heavens! what symptoms!" cried Dr. Baleinier, examining with growing terror the countenance of Rodin, which from green was turning blue.

"What is it?" asked all the spectators, with one voice.

"What is it?" repeated the doctor, draw-

ing back as if he had trodden upon a serpent. "It is the cholera! and contagious!"

On this frightful magic word, Father d'Aigrigny abandoned his hold on Rodin, who rolled upon the floor.

"He is lost!" cried Dr. Baleinier. "But I will run to fetch the means for a last effort." And he rushed toward the door.

The Princess de Saint-Dizier, Father d'Aigrigny, the bishop, and the cardinal followed in terror the flight of Dr. Baleinier. They all pressed to the door, which, in their consternation, they could not open. It opened at last—but from without—and Gabriel appeared upon the threshold. Gabriel, the type of the true priest, the holy, the evangelical minister, to whom we can never pay enough of respect and ardent sympathy, and tender admiration. His angelic countenance, in its mild serenity, offered a striking contrast to these faces, all disturbed and contracted with terror.

The young priest was nearly thrown down by the fugitives, who rushed through the now open doorway, exclaiming: "Do not go in! he is dying of the cholera. Fly!"

On these words, pushing back the bishop, who, being the last, was trying to force a passage, Gabriel ran toward Rodin, while the prelate succeeded in making his escape.

Rodin, stretched upon the carpet, his limbs twisted with fearful cramps, was writhing in the extremity of pain. The violence of his fall had, no doubt, roused him to consciousness, for he moaned, in a sepulchral voice: "They leave me to die—like a dog—the cowards! Help!—no one—"

And the dying man, rolling on his back with a convulsive movement, turned toward the ceiling a face on which was branded the infernal despair of the damned as he once more repeated: "No one!—not one!"

His eyes, which suddenly flamed with fury, just then met the large blue eyes of the angelic and mild countenance of Gabriel, who, kneeling beside him, said to him, in his soft, grave tones: "I am here, father—to help you, if help be possible—to pray for you, if God calls you to Him."

"Gabriel!" murmured Rodin, with failing voice; "forgive me for the evil I have done you—do not leave me—do not—"

Rodin could not finish; he had succeeded in raising himself into a sitting posture; he now uttered a loud cry, and fell back without sense or motion.

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The same day it was announced in the evening papers: "The cholera has broken

out in Paris. The first case declared itself this day, at half-past three P.M., in the Rue de Babylone, at Saint-Dizier House."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SQUARE OF NOTRE-DAME.

A WEEK had passed since Rodin was seized with the cholera, and its ravages had continually increased. That was an awful time! A funeral pall was spread over Paris, once so gay. And yet, never had the sky been of a more settled, purer blue; never had the sun shone more brilliantly. The inexorable serenity of nature, during the ravages of the deadly scourge, offered a strange and mysterious contrast. The flaunting light of the dazzling sunshine fell full upon the features contracted by a thousand agonizing fears. Each trembled for himself, or for those dear to him; every countenance was stamped with an expression of feverish astonishment and dread. People walked with rapid steps, as if they would escape from the fate which threatened them; besides, they were in haste to return to their homes,

for often they left life, health, happiness, and, two hours later, they found agony, death, and despair.

At every moment, new dismal objects met the view. Sometimes carts passed along, filled with coffins symmetrically piled; they stopped before every house. Men in black and gray garments were in waiting before the door; they held out their hands, and to some, one coffin was thrown, to some two, frequently three or four, from the same house. It sometimes happened that the store was quickly exhausted, and the cart, which had arrived full, went away empty, while many of the dead in the street were still unserved. In nearly every dwelling, upstairs and down, from the roof to the cellar, there was a stunning tapping of hammers; coffins were being nailed down, and so many, so very many were nailed, that sometimes those who worked stopped from sheer fatigue. Then broke forth laments, heartrending moans, despairing imprecations. They were uttered by those from whom the men in black and gray had taken some one to fill the coffins.

Unceasingly were the coffins filled, and day and night did those men work, but by day more than by night, for, as soon as it

was dusk, came a gloomy file of vehicles of all kinds—the usual hearses were not sufficient; but cars, carts, drays, hackney-coaches, and such like, swelled the funeral procession; different to the other conveyances which entered the streets full and went away empty—these came empty but soon returned full. During that period, the windows of many houses were illuminated, and often the lights remained burning till the morning. It was "the season." These illuminations resembled the gleaming rays which shine in the gay haunts of pleasure; but there were tapers instead of wax candles, and the chanting of prayers for the dead replaced the murmur of the ball-room. In the streets, instead of the facetious transparencies which indicate the costumers, there swung at intervals huge lanterns of a blood-red color, with these words in black letters: "Assistance for those attacked with the cholera." The true places for revelry, during the night, were the churchyards; they ran riot—they, usually so desolate and silent, during the dark, quiet hours, when the cypress trees rustle in the breeze, so lonely, that no human step dared to disturb the solemn silence which reigned there at night, became, on a sudden, animated, noisy, riot-

ous, and resplendent with light. By the smoky flame of torches, which threw a red glare upon the dark fir-trees, and the white tombstones, many grave-diggers worked merrily, humming snatches of some favorite tune. Their laborious and hazardous industry then commanded a very high price; they were in such request that it was necessary to humor them. They drank often and much; they sung long and loud; and this to keep up their strength and spirits good, absolute requisites in such an employment. If, by chance, any did not finish the grave they had begun, some obliging comrade finished it for *them* (fitting expression!) and placed them in it with friendly care.

Other distant sounds responded to the joyous strains of the grave-diggers; public-houses had sprung up in the neighborhood of the churchyards, and the drivers of the dead, when they had "set down their customers," as they jocosely expressed themselves, enriched with their usual gratuities, feasted and made merry like lords; dawn often found them with a glass in their hands, and a jest on their lips; and, strange to say, among these funeral satellites, who breathed the very atmosphere of the disease, the mortality was scarcely per-

ceptible. In the dark, squalid quarters of the town, where, surrounded by infectious exhalations, the indigent population was crowded together, and miserable beings, exhausted by severe privation, were "bespoke" by the cholera, as it was energetically said at the time, not only individuals, but whole families, were carried off in a few hours; and yet, sometimes, oh, merciful Providence! one or two little children were left in the cold and empty room, after father and mother, brother and sister, had been taken away in their shells.

Frequently, houses which had swarmed with hard-working laborers were obliged to be shut up for want of tenants; in one day, they had been completely cleared by this terrible visitation, from the cellars, where little chimney-sweepers slept upon straw, to the garret, on whose cold brick floor lay stretched some wan and half-naked being, without work and without bread. But, of all the wards in Paris, that which perhaps presented the most frightful spectacle during the progress of the cholera was the city; and in the city, the square before the cathedral of Notre-Dame was almost every day the theater of dreadful scenes: for this locality was frequently thronged with those who conveyed the sick

from the neighboring streets to the Great Hospital. The cholera had not one aspect, but a thousand. So that one week after Rodin had been suddenly attacked several events combining the horrible and the grotesque occurred in the square of Notre-Dame.

Instead of the Rue d'Arcole which now leads directly to the square, it was then approached on one side by a mean narrow lane like all the other streets of the city and terminating in a dark low archway. Upon entering the square the principal door of the huge Cathedral was to the left of the spectator and facing him were the Hospital buildings. A little beyond was an opening which gave to view a portion of the parapet of the Quay Notre-Dame. A placard had been recently stuck on the discolored and sunken wall of the archway; it contained these words traced in large characters: *

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* It is well known that, at the time of the cholera, such placards were numerous in Paris, and were alternately attributed to opposite parties. Among others, to the priests, many of the bishops having published mandatory letters, or stated openly in the churches of their diocese, that the Almighty had sent the cholera as a punishment

"VENGEANCE! VENGEANCE!

"The Workingmen carried to the Hospitals are poisoned because the number of patients is too great; every night Boats filled with Corpses drop down the Seine.

"Vengeance and Death to the murderers of the People!"

Two men enveloped in cloaks and half-hidden in the deep shadow of the vault were listening with anxious curiosity to the threatening murmur which rose with increasing force from among the tumultuous assembly grouped around the Hospital. Soon cries of "Death to the doctors! Vengeance!" reached the ears of the persons who were in ambush under the arch.

"The posters are working," said one; "the train is on fire. When once the populace is roused we can set them on whom we please."

"I say," replied the other man, "look over there. That Hercules whose athletic form towers above the mob was one of the most frantic leaders when M. Hardy's factory was destroyed."

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to France for having driven away its lawful sovereign, and assimilated the Catholic to other forms of worship.

"To be sure he was; I know him again. Wherever mischief is to be done, you are sure to find those vagabonds."

"Now, take my advice, do not let us remain under this archway," said the other man; "the wind is as cold as ice, and though I am cased in flannel—"

"You are right, the cholera is confoundedly impolite. Besides, everything is going on well here; I am likewise assured that the whole of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine is ready to rise to the republican cause; that will serve our ends, and our holy religion will triumph over revolutionary impiety. Let us rejoin Father d'Aigrigny."

"Where shall we find him?"

"Near here, come—come." The two hastily disappeared.

The sun, beginning to decline, shed its golden rays upon the blackened sculptures of the porch of Notre-Dame, and upon its two massy towers, rising in imposing majesty against a perfectly blue sky; for during the last few days a northeast wind, dry and cold, had driven away the lightest cloud. A considerable number of people, as we have already stated, obstructed the approach to the Hospital; they crowded round the iron railings that protect the

front of the building, behind which was stationed a detachment of infantry, the cries of "Death to the doctors!' becoming every moment more threatening. The people who thus vociferated belonged to an idle, vagabond, and depraved populace —the dregs of the Paris mob; and (terrible spectacle!) the unfortunate beings who were forcibly carried through the midst of these hideous groups entered the Hospital, while the air sounded with hoarse clamors and cries of "Death." Every moment fresh victims were brought along in litters and on stretchers; the litters were frequently furnished with coarse curtains, and thus the sick occupants were concealed from the public gaze; but the stretchers having no covering, the convulsive movements of the dying patients often thrust aside the sheet, and exposed to view their faces, livid as corpses. Far from inspiring with terror the wretches assembled round the Hospital, such spectacles became to them the signal for savage jests, and atrocious predictions upon the fate of these poor creatures, when once in the power of the doctors.

The big blaster and Ciboule, with a good many of their adherents, were among the mob. After the destruction of Hardy's factory, the quarryman was formally ex-

pelled from the union of the Wolves, who would have nothing more to do with this wretch; since then, he had plunged into the grossest debauchery, and speculating on his herculean strength, had hired himself as the officious champion of Ciboule and her compeers. With the exception, therefore, of some chance passengers, the Square of Notre-Dame was filled with a ragged crowd, composed of the refuse of the Parisian populace—wretches who call for pity as well as blame; for misery, ignorance and destitution beget but too fatally vice and crime. These savages of civilization felt neither pity, improvement, nor terror at the shocking sights with which they were surrounded; careless of a life which was a daily struggle against hunger, or the allurements of guilt, they braved the pestilence with infernal audacity, or sunk under it with blasphemy on their lips.

The tall form of the quarryman was conspicuous among the rest; with inflamed eyes and swollen features, he yelled at the top of his voice: "Death to the body snatchers! they poison the people."

"That is easier than to feed them," added Ciboule. Then, addressing herself to an old man, who was being carried with great

difficulty through the dense crowd, upon a chair, by two men, the hag continued: "Hey! don't go in there, old croker; die here in the open air, instead of dying in that den, where you'll be doctored like an old rat."

"Yes," added the quarryman; "and then they'll throw you into the water to feast the fishes, which you won't swallow any more."

At these atrocious cries, the old man looked wildly around, and uttered faint groans. Ciboule wished to stop the persons who were carrying him, and they had much difficulty in getting rid of the hag. The number of cholera patients arriving increased every moment, and soon neither litters or stretchers could be obtained, so that they were borne along in the arms of the attendants. Several awful episodes bore witness to the startling rapidity of the infection. Two men were carrying a stretcher covered with a blood-stained sheet; one of them suddenly felt himself attacked with the complaint; he stopped short, his powerless arms let go the stretcher; he turned pale, staggered, fell upon the patient, becoming as livid as him; the other man, struck with terror, fled precipitately, leaving his companion and the

dying man in the midst of the crowd. Some drew back in horror, others burst into a savage laugh.

"The horses have taken fright," said the quarryman, "and have left the turnout in the lurch."

"Help!" cried the dying man, with a despairing accent; "for pity's sake take me in."

"There's no more room in the pit," said one, in a jeering tone.

"And you've no legs left to reach the gallery," added another.

The sick man made an effort to rise; but his strength failed him; he fell back exhausted on the mattress. A sudden movement took place among the crowd, the stretcher was overturned, the old man and his companion were trodden under foot, and their groans were drowned in the cries of "Death to the body-snatchers!" The yells were renewed with fresh fury, but the ferocious band, who respected nothing in their savage fury, were soon after obliged to open their ranks to several workmen, who vigorously cleared the way for two of their friends, carrying in their arms a poor artisan. He was still young, but his heavy and already livid head hung down upon the shoulder of one of them.

A little child followed, sobbing, and holding by one of the workmen's coats. The measured and sonorous sound of several drums was now heard at a distance in the winding streets of the city; they were beating the call to arms, for sedition was rife in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. The drummers emerged from under the archway, and were traversing the square, when one of them, a gray-haired veteran, suddenly slackened the rolling of his drum, and stood still: his companions turned round in surprise—he had turned green; his legs gave way, he stammered some unintelligible words, and had fallen upon the pavement before those in the front rank had time to pause. The overwhelming rapidity of this attack startled for a moment the most hardened among the surrounding spectators; for, wondering at the interruption, a part of the crowd had rushed toward the soldiers.

At sight of the dying man, supported in the arms of two of his comrades, one of the individuals, who, concealed under the arch, had watched the beginning of the popular excitement, said to the drummers: "Your comrade drank, perhaps, at some fountain on the road?"

"Yes, sir," replied one; "he was very

thirsty; he drank two mouthfuls of water on the Place du Chatelet."

"Then he is poisoned," said the man.

"Poisoned?" cried several voices.

"It is not surprising," replied the man, in a mysterious tone; "poison is thrown into the public fountains; and this very morning a man was massacred in the Rue Beaubourg, who was discovered emptying a paper of arsenic into a pot of wine at a public-house."*

Having said these words, the man disappeared in the crowd. This report, no less absurd than the tales about the poisoning of the Hospital patients, was received with a general burst of indignation. Five or six ragged beings, regular ruffians, seized the body of the expiring drummer, hoisted it upon their shoulders, in spite of all the efforts of his comrades to prevent them, and paraded the square exhibiting the dismal trophy. Ciboule and the quarryman went before, crying: "Make way for the corpse! This is how they poison the people!"

A fresh incident now attracted the at-

* It is notorious that, at this unhappy period, several persons were massacred under a false accusation of poisoning the fountains, etc.

tention of the crowd. A traveling-carriage, which had not been able to pass along the Quai Napoleon, the pavement of which was up, had ventured among the intricate streets of the city, and now arrived in the square of Notre-Dame on its way to the other side of the Seine. Like many others, its owners were flying from Paris, to escape the pestilence which decimated it. A man-servant and a lady's-maid were in the rumble, and they exchanged a glance of alarm as they passed the Hospital, while a young man seated in the front part of the carriage let down the glass, and called to the postilions to go slowly, for fear of accident, as the crowd was very dense at that part of the square. This young man was Lord Morinval, and on the back seat were Lord Montbron and his niece, Lady Morinval. The pale and anxious countenance of the young lady showed the alarm which she felt; and Montbron, notwithstanding his firmness of mind, appeared to be very uneasy; he, as well as his niece, frequently had recourse to a smelling-bottle filled with camphor.

During the last few minutes the carriage had advanced very slowly, the postilions managing their horses with great caution, when a sudden hubbub, at first distant and

undefined, but soon more distinct, arose among the throng; as it drew near, the ringing sound of chains and metal, peculiar to the artillery wagons, was plainly audible, and presently one of these vehicles came toward the traveling-carriage, from the direction of the Quai Notre-Dame. It seemed strange that though the crowd was so compact, yet, at the rapid approach of this wagon, the close ranks of human beings opened as if by enchantment, but the following words which were passed from mouth to mouth soon accounted for the prodigy: "A wagon full of dead! the wagon of the dead!" As we have already stated, the usual funeral conveyances were no longer sufficient for the removal of the corpses; a number of artillery-wagons had been put into requisition, and the coffins were hastily piled in these novel hearses.

Many of the spectators regarded this gloomy vehicle with dismay, but the quarryman and his band redoubled their horrible jokes.

"Make way for the omnibus of the departed!" cried Ciboule.

"No danger of having one's toes crushed in that omnibus," said the quarryman.

"Doubtless, they're easy to please, the stiff-uns in there."

"They never want to be set down, at all events."

"I say, there's only one reg'lar on duty as postilion!"

"That's true, the leaders are driven by a man in a smock-frock."

"Oh! I dare say the other soldier was tired, lazy fellow! and got into the omnibus with the others—they'll all get out at the same big hole."

"Head-foremost, you know."

"Yes, they pitch them head first into a bed of lime."

"Why, one might follow the dead-cart blind-fold, and no mistake. It's worse than Montfauçon knacker-yards!"

"Ha! ha! ha!—it's rather gamey!" said the quarryman, alluding to the infectious and cadaverous odor which this funeral conveyance left behind it.

"Here's sport!" exclaimed Ciboule; "the omnibus of the dead will run against the fine coach. Hurrah!—the rich folks will smell death."

Indeed, the wagon was now directly in front of the carriage, and at a very little distance from it. A man in a smock-frock and wooden shoes drove the two leaders, and an artilleryman the other horses. The coffins were so piled up within this wagon

that its semi-circular top did not shut down closely, so that, as it jolted heavily over the uneven pavement, the biers could be seen chafing against each other. The fiery eyes and inflamed countenance of the man in the smock-frock showed that he was half intoxicated; urging on the horses with his voice, his heels, and his whip, he paid no attention to the remonstrances of the soldier, who had great difficulty in restraining his own animals, and was obliged to follow the irregular movements of the carman. Advancing in this disorderly manner, the wagon deviated from its course just as it should have passed the traveling-carriage, and ran against it. The shock forced open the top, one of the coffins was thrown out, and, after damaging the panels of the carriage, fell upon the pavement with a dull and heavy sound. The deal planks had been hastily nailed together, and were shivered in the fall, and from the wreck of the coffin rolled a livid corpse, half enveloped in a shroud.

At this horrible spectacle, Lady Morinval, who had mechanically leaned forward, gave a loud scream, and fainted. The crowd fell back in dismay; the postilions, no less alarmed, took advantage of the space left open to them by the retreat of

the multitude; they whipped their horses, and the carriage dashed on toward the quay. As it disappeared behind the furthermost buildings of the Hospital, the shrill, joyous notes of distant trumpets were heard, and repeated shouts proclaimed: "The Cholera Masquerade!" The words announced one of those episodes combining buffoonery with terror, which marked the period when the pestilence was on the increase, though now they can with difficulty be credited. If the evidence of eye-witnesses did not agree in every particular with the accounts given in the public papers of this masquerade, they might be regarded as the ravings of some diseased brain, and not as the notice of a fact which really occurred.

"The Masquerade of the Cholera" appeared, we say, in the square of Notre-Dame, just as Morinval's carriage gained the quay, after disengaging itself from the death wagon.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHOLERA MASQUERADE.*

A STREAM of people, who preceded the masquerade, made a sudden irruption through the arch into the square, uttering loud cheers as they advanced. Children were also there, blowing horns, while some hooted and others hissed.

The quarryman, Ciboule, and their band, attracted by this new spectacle, rushed tumultuously toward the arch. Instead of the two eating-houses, which now (1845) stand on either side of the Rue d'Arcole, there was then only one,

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*We read in the *Constitutionnel*, Saturday, Mar. 31, 1832: "The Parisians readily conform to that part of the official instructions with regard to the cholera which prescribes, as a preservation from the disease, not to be afraid, to amuse one's self, etc. The pleasures of Mid-Lent have been as brilliant and as mad as those of the carnival itself. For a long time past there had not been so many balls at this period of the year. Even the cholera has been made the subject of an itinerant caricature."

situated to the left of the vaulted passage, and much celebrated among the joyous community of students for the excellence both of its cookery and its wines. At the first blare of the trumpets, sounded by the outriders in livery who preceded the masquerade, the windows of the great room of the eating-house were thrown open, and several waiters, with their napkins under their arms, leaned forward, impatient to witness the arrival of the singular guests they were expecting.

At length, the grotesque procession made its appearance in the thick of an immense uproar. The train comprised a chariot, escorted by men and women on horseback, clad in rich and elegant fancy dresses. Most of these maskers belonged to the middle and easy classes of society. The report had spread that a masquerade was in preparation, for the purpose of daring the cholera, and, by this joyous demonstration, to revive the courage of the affrighted populace. Immediately, artists, young men about town, students, and so on, responded to the appeal, and though till now unknown one to the other, they easily fraternized together. Many brought their mistresses, to complete the show. A subscription had been opened to defray the expenses, and,

that morning, after a splendid breakfast at the other end of Paris, the joyous troop had started bravely on their march, to finish the day by a dinner in the square of Notre-Dame.

We say bravely, for it required a singular turn of mind, a rare firmness of character, in young women, to traverse, in this fashion, a great city plunged in consternation and terror—to fall in at every step with litters loaded with the dying, and carriages filled with the dead—to defy, as it were, in a spirit of strange pleasantry, the plague that was decimating the Parisians. It is certain that, in Paris alone, and there only among a peculiar class, could such an idea have ever been conceived or realized. Two men, grotesquely disguised as postilions at a funeral, with formidable false noses, rose-colored crape hat-bands, and large favors of roses and crape bows at their button-holes, rode before the vehicle. Upon the platform of the car were groups of allegorical personages, representing WINE, PLEASURE, LOVE, PLAY. The mission of these symbolical beings was, by means of jokes, sarcasms, and mockeries, to plague the life out of Goodman Cholera, a sort of funereal and burlesque Cassander, whom they ridi-

culed and made game of in a hundred ways. The moral of the play was this: "To brave Cholera in security, let us drink, laugh, game, and make love!"

WINE was represented by a huge, lusty Silenus, thick-set, and with swollen paunch, a crown of ivy on his brow, a panther's skin across his shoulder, and in his hand a large gilt goblet, wreathed with flowers. None other than Ninny Moulin, the famous moral and religious writer, could have exhibited to the astonished and delighted spectators an ear of so deep a scarlet, so majestic an abdomen, and a face of such triumphant and majestic fullness. Every moment, Ninny Moulin appeared to empty his cup—after which he burst out laughing in the face of Goodman Cholera. Goodman Cholera, a cadaverous pantaloon, was half-enveloped in a shroud; his mask of greenish cardboard, with red, hollow eyes, seemed every moment to grin as in mockery of death; from beneath his powdered peruke, surmounted by a pyramidal cotton night-cap, appeared his neck and arm, dyed of a bright green color; his lean hand, which shook almost always wih a feverish trembling (not feigned, but natural), rested upon a crutch-handled cane; finally, as was be-

coming in a pantaloon, he wore red stockings, with buckles at the knees and high slippers of black beaver. This grotesque representative of the cholera was Sleepinbuff.

Notwithstanding a slow and dangerous fever, caused by the excessive use of brandy, and by constant debauchery, that was silently undermining his constitution, Jacques Rennepont had been induced by Morok to join the masquerade. The brute-tamer himself, dressed as the King of Diamonds, represented PLAY. His forehead was adorned with a diadem of gilded paper, his face was pale and impassible, and, as his long, yellow beard fell down the front of his party-colored robe, Morok looked exactly the character he personated. From time to time, with an air of grave mockery, he shook close to the eyes of Goodman Cholera a large bag full of sounding counters, and on this bag were painted all sorts of playing-cards. A certain stiffness in the right arm showed that the lion-tamer had not yet quite recovered from the effects of the wound which the panther had inflicted before being stabbed by Djalma.

PLEASURE, who also represented Laughter, classically shook her rattle, with its sonorous gilded bells, close to the ears of

Goodman Cholera. She was a quick, lively young girl, and her fine black hair was crowned with a scarlet cap of liberty. For Sleepinbuff's sake, she had taken the place of the poor Bacchanal Queen, who would not have failed to attend on such an occasion—she, who had been so valiant and gay, when she bore her part in a less philosophical, but not less amusing masquerade. Another pretty creature, Modeste Bornichoux, who served as a model to a painter of renown (one of the cavaliers of the procession), was eminently successful in her representation of LOVE. He could not have had a more charming face, and more graceful form. Clad in a light blue spangled tunic, with a blue and silver band across her chestnut hair, and little transparent wings affixed to her white shoulders, she placed one forefinger upon the other, and pointed with the prettiest impertinence at Goodman Cholera. Around the principal group, other maskers, more or less grotesque in appearance, waved each a banner, on which were inscriptions of a very anacreontic character, considering the circumstances:

"Down with the Cholera!" "Short and sweet!" "Laugh away, laugh always!" "We'll collar the Cholera!" "Love for-

ever!" "Wine forever!" "Come, if you dare, old terror!"

There was really such audacious gayety in this masquerade that the greater number of the spectators, at the moment when it crossed the square, in the direction of the eating-house, where dinner was waiting, applauded it loudly and repeatedly. This sort of admiration, which courage, however mad and blind, almost always inspires, appeared to others (a small number, it must be confessed) a kind of defiance to the wrath of Heaven; and these received the procession with angry murmurs. This extraordinary spectacle, and the different impressions it produced, were too remote from all customary facts to admit of a just appreciation. We hardly know if this daring bravado was deserving of praise or blame.

Besides, the appearance of those plagues, which from age to age decimate the population of whole countries, has almost always been accompanied by a sort of mental excitement, which none of those who have been spared by the contagion can hope to escape. It is a strange fever of the mind, which sometimes rouses the most stupid prejudices and the most ferocious passions, and sometimes inspires, on the

contrary, the most magnificent devotion, the most courageous actions—with some, driving the fear of death to a point of the wildest terror—with others, exciting the contempt of life to express itself in the most audacious bravadoes. Caring little for the praise or blame it might deserve, the masquerade arrived before the eating-house, and made its entry in the midst of universal acclamations. Everything seemed to combine to give full effect to this strange scene, by the opposition of the most singular contrasts. Thus the tavern, in which was to be held this extraordinary feast, being situated at no great distance from the antique cathedral and the gloomy hospital, the religious anthems of the ancient temple, the cries of the dying, and the bacchanalian songs of the banqueters, must needs mingle, and by turns drown one another. The maskers now got down from their chariot, and from their horses, and went to take their places at the repast which was waiting for them. The actors in the masquerade are at table in the great room of the tavern. They are joyous, noisy, even riotous. Yet their gayety has a strange tone, peculiar to itself.

Sometimes, the most resolute involun-

tarily remember that their life is at stake in this mad and audacious game with destiny. That fatal thought is rapid as the icy fever-shudder, which chills you in an instant; therefore, from time to time, an abrupt silence, lasting indeed only for a second, betrays these passing emotions, which are almost immediately effaced by new bursts of joyful acclamations, for each one says to himself: "No weakness! my chum and my girl are looking at me!"

And all laugh, and knock glasses together, and challenge the next man, and drink out of the glass of the nearest woman. Jacques had taken off the mask and peruke of Goodman Cholera. His thin, leaden features, his deadly paleness, the lurid brilliancy of his hollow eyes, showed the incessant progress of the slow malady which was consuming this unfortunate man, brought by excesses to the last extremity of weakness. Though he felt the slow fire devouring his entrails, he concealed his pain beneath a forced and nervous smile.

To the left of Jacques was Morok, whose fatal influence was ever on the increase, and to his right the girl disguised as PLEASURE. She was named Mariette. By her side sat Ninny Moulin, in all his

majestic bulk, who often pretended to be looking for his napkin under the table, in order to have the opportunity of pressing the knees of his other neighbor, Modeste, the representative of LOVE. Most of the guests were grouped according to their several tastes, each tender pair together, and the bachelors where they could. They had reached the second course, and the excellence of the wine, the good cheer, the gay speeches, and even the singularity of the occasion, had raised their spirits to a high degree of excitement, as may be gathered from the extraordinary incidents of the following scene.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEFIANCE.

TWO or three times, without being remarked by the guests, one of the waiters had come to whisper to his fellows, and point with expressive gesture to the ceiling. But his comrades had taken small account of his observations or fears, not wishing, doubtless, to disturb the guests, whose mad gayety seemed ever on the increase.

"Who can doubt now of the superiority of our treating this impertinent Cholera? Has he dared even to touch our sacred battalion?" said a magnificent mountebank Turk, one of the standard-bearers of the masquerade.

"Here is all the mystery," answered another. "It is very simple. Only laugh in the face of the plauge, and it will run away from you."

"And right enough too, for very stupid work it does," added a pretty little Columbine, emptying her glass.

"You are right, my darling; it is intolerably stupid work," answered the Clown belonging to the Columbine: "here you are, very quiet, enjoying life, and all on a sudden you die with an atrocious grimace. Well! what then? Very clever, isn't it? I ask you, what does it prove?"

"It proves," replied an illustrious painter of the romantic school, disguised like a Roman out of one of David's pictures, "it proves that the Cholera is a wretched colorist, for he has nothing but a dirty green on his pallet. Evidently he is a pupil of Jacobus, that king of classical painters, who are another species of plagues."

"And yet, master," added respectfully a pupil of the great painter, "I have seen some cholera patients whose convulsions were rather fine, and their dying looks first-rate!"

"Gentlemen," cried a sculptor of no less celebrity, "the question lies in a nutshell. The Cholera is a detestable colorist, but a good draughtsman. He shows you the skeleton in no time. By heaven! how he strips off the flesh!—Michael Angelo would be nothing to him."

"True," cried they all, with one voice; "the Cholera is a bad colorist but a good draughtsman."

"Moreover, gentlemen," added Ninny Moulin with comic gravity, "this plague brings with it a providential lesson, as the great Bossuet would have said."

"The lesson! the lesson!"

"Yes, gentlemen; I seem to hear a voice from above proclaiming: 'Drink of the best, empty your purse, and kiss your neighbor's wife; for your hours are perhaps numbered, unhappy wretch!' "

So saying, the orthodox Silenus took advantage of a momentary absence of mind on the part of Modeste, his neighbor, to imprint on the blooming cheek of Love a long loud kiss. The example was con-

tagious, and a storm of kisses was mingled with bursts of laughter.

"Ha! blood and thunder!" cried the great painter as he gayly threatened Ninny Moulin; "you are very lucky that to-morrow will perhaps be the end of the world, or else I should pick a quarrel with you for having kissed my lovely Love."

"Which proves to you, O Rubens! O Raphael! the thousand advantages of the Cholera, whom I declare to be essentially sociable and caressing."

"And philanthropic," said one of the guests; "thanks to him, creditors take care of the health of their debtors. This morning a usurer, who feels a particular interest in my existence, brought me all sorts of anti-choleraic drugs, and begged me to make use of them."

"And I!" said the pupil of the great painter. "My tailor wished to force me to wear a flannel band next to the skin, because I owe him a thousand crowns. But I answered, 'Oh, tailor, give me a receipt in full, and I will wrap myself up in flannel, to preserve you my custom."

"O Cholera, I drink to thee!" said Ninny Moulin, by way of grotesque invocation. "You are not Despair; on the contrary, you are the emblem of Hope—yes, of Hope.

How many husbands, how many wives, longed for a number (alas! too uncertain chance) in the lottery of widowhood! You appear, and their hearts are gladdened. Thanks to you, benevolent pest! their chances of liberty are increased a hundredfold."

"And how grateful heirs ought to be! A cold—a heat—a trifle—and there, in an hour, some old uncle becomes a revered benefactor!"

"And those who are always looking out for other people's places—what an ally they must find in the Cholera!"

"And how true it will make many vows of constancy!" said Modeste, sentimentally. "How many villains have sworn to a poor, weak woman, to love her all their lives, who never meant (the wretches!) to keep their word so well!"

"Gentlemen," cried Ninny Moulin, "since we are now, perhaps, at the eve of the end of the world, as yonder celebrated painter has expressed it, I propose to play the world topsy-turvy; I beg these ladies to make advances to us, to tease us, to excite us, to steal kisses from us, to take all sorts of liberties with us, and (we shall not die of it (even to insult us. Yes, I declare that I will allow myself to be

insulted. So, Love, you may offer me the greatest insult that can be offered to a virtuous and modest bachelor," added the religious writer, leaning over toward his neighbor, who repulsed him with peals of laughter; and the proposal of Ninny Moulin being received with general hilarity, a new impulse was given to the mirth and riot.

In the midst of the uproar, the waiter, who had before entered the room several times, to whisper uneasily to his comrades, while he pointed to the ceiling, again appeared with a pale and agitated countenance; approaching the man who performed the office of butler, he said to him, in a low voice, tremulous with emotion: "They are come!"

"Who?"

"You know—up there;" and he pointed to the ceiling.

"Oh!" said the butler, becoming thoughtful; "where are they?"

"They have just gone upstairs; they are there now," answered the waiter, shaking his head with an air of alarm; "yes, they are there!"

"What does master say?"

"He is very vexed, because—" and the waiter glanced round at the guests. "He

does not know what to do; he has sent me to you."

"What the devil have I to do with it?" said the other, wiping his forehead. "It was to be expected, and cannot be helped."

"I will not remain here till they begin."

"You may as well go, for your long face already attracts attention. Tell master we must wait for the upshot."

The above incident was scarcely perceived in the midst of the growing tumult of the joyous feast. But, among the guests, one alone laughed not, drank not. This was Jacques. With fixed and lurid eye, he gazed upon vacancy. A stranger to what was passing around him, the unhappy man thought of the Bacchanal Queen who had been so gay and brilliant in the midst of similar saturnalia. The remembrance of that one being, whom he still loved with an extravagant love, was the only thought that from time to time roused him from his besotted state.

It is strange, but Jacques had only consented to join this masquerade because the mad scene reminded him of the merry day he had spent with Cephyse—the famous breakfast, after a night of dancing, in which the Bacchanal Queen, from some extraordinary presentiment, had proposed

a lugubrious toast with regard to this very pestilence, which was then reported to be approaching France. "To the Cholera!" had she said. "Let him spare those who wish to live, and kill at the same moment those who dread to part!"

And now, at this time, remembering those mournful words, Jacques was absorbed in painful thought. Morok perceived his absence of mind and said aloud to him, "You have given over drinking, Jacques. Have you had enough wine? Then you will want brandy. I will send for some."

"I want neither wine nor brandy," answered Jacques, abruptly, and he fell back into a somber reverie.

"Well, you may be right," resumed Morok, in a sardonic tone, and raising his voice still higher. "You do well to take care of yourself. I was wrong to name brandy in these times. There would be as much temerity in facing a bottle of brandy as the barrel of a loaded pistol."

On hearing his courage as a toper called in question, Sleepinbuff looked angrily at Morok. "You think it is from cowardice that I will not drink brandy!" cried the unfortunate man, whose half-extinguished intellect was roused to defend what he

called his dignity. "Is it from cowardice that I refuse, d'ye think, Morok? Answer me!"

"Come, my good fellow, we have all shown our pluck to-day," said one of the guests to Jacques; "you, above all, who, being rather indisposed, yet had the courage to take the part of Goodman Cholera."

"Gentlemen," resumed Morok, seeing the general attention fixed upon himself and Sleepinbuff, "I was only joking; for if my comrade" (pointing to Jacques) "had the imprudence to accept my offer, it would be an act, not of courage, but of foolhardiness. Luckily, he has sense enough to renounce a piece of boasting so dangerous at this time, and I—"

"Waiter!" cried Jacques, interrupting Morok with angry impatience, "two bottles of brandy, and two glasses!"

"What are you going to do?" said Morok, with pretended uneasiness. "Why do you order two bottles of brandy?"

"For a duel," said Jacques, in a cool, resolute tone.

"A duel!" cried the spectators, in surprise.

"Yes," resumed Jacques, "a duel with brandy. You pretend there is as much danger in facing a bottle of brandy as a

loaded pistol; let us each take a full bottle, and see who will be the first to cry quarter."

This strange proposition was received by some with shouts of joy, and by others with genuine uneasiness.

"Bravo! the champions of the bottle!" cried the first.

"No, no; there would be too much danger in such a contest," said the others.

"Just now," added one of the guests, "this challenge is as serious as an invitation to fight to the death."

"You hear," said Morok, with a diabolical smile, "you hear, Jacques? Will you now retreat before the danger?"

At these words, which reminded him of the peril to which he was about to expose himself, Jacques started, as if a sudden idea had occurred to him. He raised his head proudly, his cheeks were slightly flushed, his eye shone with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, and he exclaimed in a firm voice: "Hang it, waiter! are you deaf? I asked you for two bottles of brandy."

"Yes, sir," said the waiter, going to fetch them, although himself frightened at what might be the result of this bacchanalian struggle. But the mad and perilous

resolution of Jacques was applauded by the majority.

Ninny Moulin moved about on his chair, stamped his feet, and shouted with all his might: "Bacchus and drink! bottles and glasses! the throats are dry! brandy to the rescue! Largess! largess!"

And, like a true champion of the tournament, he embraced Modeste, adding, to excuse the liberty: "Love, you shall be the Queen of Beauty, and I am only anticipating the victor's happiness!"

"Brandy to the rescue!" repeated they all, in chorus. "Largess!"

"Gentlemen," added Ninny Moulin, with enthusiasm, "shall we remain indifferent to the noble example set us by Goodman Cholera? He said in his pride, 'brandy!' Let us gloriously answer, 'punch!' "

"Yes, yes! punch!"

"Punch to the rescue!"

"Waiter!" shouted the religious writer, with the voice of a stentor, "waiter! have you a pan, a caldron, a hogshead, or any other immensity, in which we can brew a monster punch?"

"A Babylonian punch!"

"A lake of punch!"

"An ocean of punch!"

Such was the ambitious crescendo that followed the proposition of Ninny Moulin.

"Sir," answered the waiter, with an air of triumph, "we just happen to have a large copper caldron, quite new. It has never been used, and would hold at least thirty bottles."

"Bring the caldron!" said Ninny Moulin, majestically.

"The caldron forever!" shouted the chorus.

"Put in twenty bottles of brandy, six loaves of sugar, a dozen lemons, a pound of cinnamon, and then—fire! fire!" shouted the religious writer, with the most vociferous exclamations.

"Yes, yes! fire!" repeated the chorus.

The proposition of Ninny Moulin gave a new impetus to the general gayety; the most extravagant remarks were mingled with the sound of kisses, taken or given under the pretext that perhaps there would be no to-morrow, that one must make the most of the present, etc., etc. Suddenly, in one of the moments of silence which sometimes occur in the midst of the greatest tumult, a succession of slow and measured taps sounded above the ceiling of the banqueting-room. All remained silent, and listened.

CHAPTER XXI.

BRANDY TO THE RESCUE.

AFTER the lapse of some seconds, the singular rapping which had so much surprised the guests was again heard, but this time louder and longer.

"Waiter!" cried one of the party, "what in the devil's name is that knocking?"

The waiter, exchanging with his comrades a look of uneasiness and alarm, stammered out in reply: "Sir—it is—it is—"

"Well! I suppose it is some crabbed, cross-grained lodger, some animal, the enemy of joy, who is pounding on the floor of his room to warn us to sing less loud," said Ninny Moulin.

"Then, by a general rule," answered sententiously the pupil of the great painter, "if the lodger or landlord ask for silence, tradition bids us reply by an infernal uproar, destined to drown all his remonstrances. Such, at least," added the scapegrace, modestly, "are the foreign re-

lations that I have always seen observed between neighboring powers."

This remark was received with general laughter and applause. During the tumult, Morok questioned one of the waiters, and then exclaimed in a shrill tone, which rose above the clamor: "I demand a hearing!"

"Granted!" cried the others, gayly. During the silence which followed the exclamation of Morok, the noise was again heard; it was this time quicker than before.

"The lodger is innocent," said Morok, with a strange smile, "and would be quite incapable of interfering with your enjoyment."

"Then why does he keep up that knocking?" said Ninny Moulin, emptying his glass.

"Like a deaf man who has lost his earhorn?" added the young artist.

"It is not the lodger who is knocking," said Morok, in a sharp, quick tone; "for they are nailing him down in his coffin." A sudden and mournful silence followed these words.

"His coffin—no, I am wrong," resumed Morok; "her coffin, I should say, or more properly their coffin; for, in these pressing

times, they put mother and child together."

"A woman!" cried Pleasure, addressing the waiter; "is it a woman that is dead?"

"Yes, ma'am; a poor young woman about twenty years of age," answered the waiter in a sorrowful tone. "Her little girl, that she was nursing, died soon after —all in less than two hours. My master is very sorry that you ladies and gents should be disturbed in this way; but he could not foresee this misfortune, as yesterday morning the young woman was quite well, and singing with all her might —no one could have been gayer than she was."

Upon these words, it was as if a funeral pall had been suddenly thrown over a scene lately so full of joy; all the rubicund and jovial faces took an expression of sadness; no one had the hardihood to make a jest of mother and child, nailed down together in the same coffin. The silence became so profound that one could hear each breath oppressed by terror; the last blows of the hammer seemed to strike painfully on every heart; it appeared as if each sad feeling, until now repressed, was about to replace that animation and gayety which

had been more factitious than sincere. The moment was decisive. It was necessary to strike an immediate blow, and to raise the spirits of the guests, for many pretty rosy faces began to grow pale, many scarlet ears became suddenly white; Ninny Moulin's were of the number.

On the contrary, Sleepinbuff exhibited an increase of audacity; he drew up his figure, bent down from the effects of exhaustion, and, with a cheek slightly flushed, he exclaimed: "Well, waiter? are those bottles of brandy coming? and the punch? Devil and all! are the dead to frighten the living?"

"He's right! Down with sorrow, and let's have the punch!" cried several of the guests, who felt the necessity of reviving their courage.

"Forward, punch!"

"Begone, dull care!"

"Jollity forever!"

"Gentlemen, here is the punch," said the waiter, opening the door. At sight of the flaming beverage, which was to reanimate their enfeebled spirits, the room rang with the loudest applause.

The sun had just set. The room was large, being capable of dining a hundred guests; and the windows were few, nar-

row, and half veiled by red cotton curtains. Though it was not yet night, some portions of this vast saloon were almost entirely dark. Two waiters brought the monster punch in an immense brass kettle, brilliant as gold, suspended from an iron bar, and crowned with flames of changing color. The burning beverage was then placed upon the table, to the great joy of the guests, who began to forget their past alarms.

"Now," said Jacques to Morok, in a taunting tone, "while the punch is burning, we will have our duel. The company shall judge." Then pointing to the two bottles of brandy which the waiter had brought, Jacques added: "Choose your weapon!"

"Do you choose," answered Morok.

"Well, here's your bottle—and here's your glass. Ninny Moulin shall be umpire."

"I do not refuse to be judge of the field," answered the religious writer; "only I must warn you, comrade, that you are playing a desperate game, and that just now, as one of these gentlemen has said, the neck of a bottle of brandy in one's mouth is perhaps more dangerous than the barrel of a loaded pistol."

"Give the word, old fellow!" said Jacques, interrupting Ninny Moulin, "or I will give it myself."

"Since you will have it so—so be it!"

"The first who gives in is conquered," said Jacques.

"Agreed!" answered Morok.

"Come, gentlemen, attention! we must follow every movement," resumed Ninny Moulin. "Let us first see if the bottles are of the same size—equality of weapons being the foremost condition."

During these preparations, profound silence reigned in the room. The courage of the majority of those present, animated for a moment by the arrival of the punch, was soon again depressed by gloomy thoughts, as they vaguely foresaw the danger of the contest between Morok and Jacques. This impression, joined to the sad thoughts occasioned by the incident of the coffin, darkened by degrees many a countenance. Some of the guests, indeed, continued to make a show of rejoicing, but their gayety appeared forced. Under certain circumstances, the smallest things will have the most powerful effect. We have said that, after sunset, a portion of this large room was plunged in obscurity; therefore, the guests who sat in the remote

corners of the apartment had no other light than the reflection of the flaming punch. Now it is well known that the flame of burning spirit throws a livid, bluish tint over the countenance; it was therefore a strange, almost frightful spectacle, to see a number of the guests, who happened to be at a distance from the windows, in this ghastly and fantastic light.

The painter, more struck than all the rest by this effect of color, exclaimed: "Look! at this end of the table we might fancy ourselves feasting with cholera patients, we are such fine blues and greens."

This jest was not much relished. Fortunately, the loud voice of Ninny Moulin demanded attention, and for a moment turned the thoughts of the company.

"The lists are open," cried the religious writer, really more frightened than he chose to appear. "Are you ready, brave champions?" he added.

"We are ready," said Morok and Jacques.

"Present! fire!" cried Ninny Moulin, clapping his hands. And the two drinkers each emptied a tumbler full of brandy at a draught.

Morok did not even knit his brow; his

marble face remained impassible; with a steady hand he replaced his glass upon the table. But Jacques, as he put down his glass, could not conceal a slight convulsive trembling, caused by internal suffering.

"Bravely done!" cried Ninny Moulin. "The quarter of a bottle of brandy at a draught—it is glorious! No one else here would be capable of such prowess. And now, worthy champions, if you believe me, you will stop where you are."

"Give the word!" answered Jacques, intrepidly. And, with feverish and shaking hand, he seized the bottle; then suddenly, instead of filling his glass, he said to Morok: "Bah! we want no glasses. It is braver to drink from the bottle. I dare you to it!"

Morok's only answer was to shrug his shoulders and raise the neck of the bottle to his lips. Jacques hastened to imitate him. The thin, yellowish, transparent glass gave a perfect view of the progressive diminution of the liquor. The stony countenance of Morok, and the pale, thin face of Jacques, on which already stood large drops of cold sweat, were now, as well as the features of the other guests, illumined by the bluish light of the punch; every eye was fixed upon Morok and

Jacques, with that barbarous curiosity which cruel spectacles seem involuntarily to inspire.

Jacques continued to drink, holding the bottle in his left hand; suddenly, he closed and tightened the fingers of his right hand with a convulsive movement; his hair clung to his icy forehead, and his countenance revealed an agony of pain. Yet he continued to drink; only, without removing his lips from the neck of the bottle, he lowered it for an instant, as if to recover breath. Just then, Jacques met the sardonic look of Morok, who continued to drink with his accustomed impassibility. Thinking that he saw the expression of insulting triumph in Morok's glance, Jacques raised his elbow abruptly and drank with avidity a few drops more. But his strength was exhausted. A quenchless fire devoured his vitals. His sufferings were too intense, and he could no longer bear up against them. His head fell backward, his jaws closed convulsively, he crushed the neck of the bottle between his teeth, his neck grew rigid, his limbs writhed with spasmodic action, and he became almost senseless.

"Jacques, my good fellow! it is nothing," cried Morok, whose ferocious glance

now sparkled with diabolical joy. Then, replacing his bottle on the table, he rose to go to the aid of Ninny Moulin, who was vainly endeavoring to hold Sleepinbuff.

This sudden attack had none of the symptoms of cholera. Yet terror seized upon all present; one of the women was taken with hysterics, and another uttered piercing cries and fainted away. Ninny Moulin, leaving Jacques in the hands of Morok, ran toward the door to seek for help—when that door was suddenly opened, and the religious writer drew back in alarm at the sight of the unexpected personage who appeared on the threshold.

CHAPTER XXII.

MEMORIES.

THE person before whom Ninny Moulin stopped in such extreme astonishment was the Bacchanal Queen.

Pale and wan, with hair in disorder, hollow cheeks, sunken eyes, and clothed almost in rags, this brilliant and joyous heroine of so many mad orgies was now only the shadow of her former self. Misery and grief were impressed on that coun-

tenance, once so charming. Hardly had she entered the room when Cephyse paused; her mournful and unquiet gaze strove to penetrate the half-obscurity of the apartment, in search of him she longed to see. Suddenly the girl started, and uttered a loud scream. She had just perceived, at the other side of a long table, by the bluish light of the punch, Jacques struggling with Morok and one of the guests, who were hardly able to restrain his convulsive movements.

At this sight, Cephyse, in her first alarm, carried away by her affection, did what she had so often done in the intoxication of joy and pleasure. Light and agile, instead of losing precious time in making a long circuit, she sprung at once upon the table, passed nimbly through the array of plates and bottles, and with one spring was by the side of the sufferer.

"Jacques!" she exclaimed, without yet remarking the lion-tamer, and throwing herself on the neck of her lover. "Jacques! it is I—Cephyse!"

That well-known voice, that heart-piercing cry, which came from the bottom of the soul, seemed not unheard by Sleepin-buff. He turned his head mechanically toward the Bacchanal Queen, without

opening his eyes, and heaved a deep sigh; his stiffened limbs relaxed, a slight trembling succeeded to the convulsions, and in a few seconds his heavy eyelids were raised with an effort, so as to uncover his dull and wandering gaze. Mute with astonishment, the spectators of this scene felt an uneasy curiosity. Cephyse, kneeling beside her lover, bathed his hands in her tears, covered them with kisses, and exclaimed, in a voice broken by sobs, "It is I—Cephyse—I have found you again—it was not my fault that I abandoned you! Forgive me, forgive—"

"Wretched woman!" cried Morok, irritated at this meeting, which might, perhaps, be fatal to his projects; "do you wish to kill him? In his present state, this agitation is death. Begone!" So saying, he seized Cephyse by the arm, just as Jacques, waking, as it were, from a painful dream, began to distinguish what was passing around him

"You? it is you!" cried the Bacchanal Queen, in amazement, as she recognized Morok, "who separated me from Jacques!"

She paused; for the dim eye of the victim, as it rested upon her, grew suddenly bright.

"Cephyse!" murmured Jacques; "is it you?"

"Yes, it is I," answered she, in a voice of deep emotion; "who have come—I will tell you—"

She was unable to continue, and, as she clasped her hands together, her pale, agitated, tearful countenance expressed her astonishment and despair at the mortal change which had taken place in the features of Jacques. He understood the cause of her surprise, and as he contemplated, in his turn, the suffering and emaciated countenance of Cephyse, he said to her, "Poor girl! you also have had to bear much grief, much misery—I should hardly have known you."

"Yes," replied Cephyse, "much grief—much misery—and worse than misery," she added, trembling, while a deep blush overspread her pale features.

"Worse than misery?" said Jacques, astonished.

"But it is you who have suffered," hastily resumed Cephyse, without answering her lover.

"Just now, I was going to make an end of it—your voice has recalled me for an instant—but I feel something here," and he laid his hand upon his breast, "which

never gives quarter. It is all the same now—I have seen you—I shall die happy."

"You shall not die, Jacques; I am here—"

"Listen to me, my girl. If I had a bushel of live coal in my stomach it could hardly burn me more. For more than a month I have been consuming my body by a slow fire. This gentleman," he added, glancing at Morok, "this dear friend, always undertook to feed the flame. I do not regret life; I have lost the habit of work, and taken to drink and riot; I should have finished by becoming a thorough blackguard; I preferred that my friend here should amuse himself with lighting a furnace in my inside. Since what I drank just now I am certain that it flames like yonder punch."

"You are both foolish and ungrateful," said Morok, shrugging his shoulders; "you held out your glass, and I filled it—and, faith, we shall drink long and often together yet."

For some moments Cephyse had not withdrawn her eyes from Morok. "I tell you that you have long blown the fire in which I have burned my skin," resumed Jacques, addressing Morok in a feeble voice, "so that they may not think I die.

of cholera. It would look as if I had been frightened by the part I played. I do not therefore reproach you, my affectionate friend," added he, with a sardonic smile; "you dug my grave gayly — and sometimes, when, seeing the great dark hole into which I was about to fall, I drew back a step—but you, my excellent friend, still pushed me forward, saying, 'Go on, my boy, go on!'—and I went on—and here I am—"

So saying, Sleepinbuff burst into a bitter laugh, which sent an icy shudder through the spectators of this scene.

"My good fellow," said Morok, coolly, "listen to me, and follow my advice—"

"Thank you! I know your advice—and, instead of listening to you, I prefer speaking to my poor Cephyse. Before I go down to the moles, I should like to tell her what weighs on my heart."

"Jacques," replied Cephyse, "do not talk so. I tell you, you shall not die."

"Why then, my brave Cephyse, I shall owe my life to you," returned Jacques, in a tone of serious feeling, which surprised the spectators. "Yes," resumed he, "when I came to myself, and saw you so poorly clad, I felt something good about my heart—do you know why?—it was be-

cause I said to myself, 'Poor girl! she has kept her word bravely; she has chosen to toil, and want, and suffer—rather than take another lover—who would have given her what I gave her as long as I could'—and that thought, Cephyse, refreshed my soul. I needed it, for I was burning—and I burn still," added he, clinching his fists with pain; "but that made me happy—it did me good—thanks, my good, brave Cephyse—yes, you are good and brave—and you were right; for I never loved any but you in the wide world; and if, in my degradation, I had one thought that raised me a little above the filth, and made me regret that I was not better—the thought was of you! Thanks then, my poor, dear love," said Jacques, whose hot and shining eyes were becoming moist; "thanks once again," and he reached his cold hand to Cephyse; "if I die, I shall die happy—if I live, I shall live happy also. Give me your hand, my brave Cephyse!—you have acted like a good and honest creature."

Instead of taking the hand which Jacques offered her, Cephyse, still kneeling, bowed her head, and dared not raise her eyes to her lover.

"You don't answer," said he, leaning

over toward the young girl; "you don't take my hand—why is this?"

The unfortunate creature only answered by stifled sobs. Borne down with shame, she held herself in so humble, so supplicating an attitude, that her forehead almost touched the feet of her lover.

Amazed at the silence and conduct of the Bacchanal Queen, Jacques looked at her with increasing agitation; suddenly he stammered out with trembling lips, "Cephyse, I know you. If you do not take my hand, it is because—" Then, his voice failing, he added, in a dull tone, after a moment's silence, "When, six weeks ago, I was taken to prison, did you not say to me, 'Jacques, I swear that I will work—and if need be, live in horrible misery—but I will live true!' That was your promise. Now, I know you never speak false; tell me you have kept your word, and I shall believe you."

Cephyse only answered by a heartrending sob, as she pressed the knees of Jacques against her heaving bosom. By a strange contradiction, more common than is generally thought—this man, degraded by intoxication and debauchery, who, since he came out of prison, had plunged in every excess, and tamely yielded to all the fatal

incitements of Morok, yet received a fearful blow when he learned, by the mute avowal of Cephyse, the infidelity of this creature, whom he had loved in spite of degradation. The first impulse of Jacques was terrible. Notwithstanding his weakness and exhaustion, he succeeded in rising from his seat, and, with a countenance contracted by rage and despair, he seized a knife, before they had time to prevent him, and turned it upon Cephyse. But at the moment he was about to strike, shrinking from an act of murder, he hurled the knife far away from him, and falling back into the chair, covered his face with his hands.

At the cry of Ninny Moulin, who had, though late, thrown himself upon Jacques to take away the knife, Cephyse raised her head; Jacques's woful dejection wrung her heart; she rose, and fell upon his neck, notwithstanding his resistance, exclaiming in a voice broken by sobs, "Jacques, if you knew! if you only knew—listen—do not condemn me without hearing me—I will tell you all, I swear to you—without falsehood—this man," and she pointed to Morok, "will not dare to deny what I say; he came and told me to have the courage to—"

her, but shook his head mournfully as he sunk down, though still supported by Ninny Moulin, Cephyse exclaimed, as she lifted her clasped hands toward him, "Jacques! one word—for pity's sake—forgive me!"

"Gentlemen, pray remove this woman," cried Morok; "the sight of her causes my friend too painful emotions."

"Come, my dear child, be reasonable," said several of the guests, who, deeply moved by this scene, were endeavoring to withdraw Cephyse from it: "leave him, and come with us; he is not in any danger."

"Gentlemen! oh, gentlemen!" cried the unfortunate creature, bursting into tears, and raising her hands in supplication; "listen to me—I will do all that you wish me—I will go, but, in Heaven's name, send for help, and do not let him die thus. Look, what pain he suffers! what horrible convulsions!"

"She is right," said one of the guests, hastening toward the door; "we must send for a doctor."

"There is no doctor to be found," said another; "they are all too busy."

"We will do better than that," cried a third; "the Hospital is just opposite, and we can carry the poor fellow thither. They

will give him instant help. A leaf of the table will make a litter, and the tablecloth a covering."

"Yes, yes, that is it," said several voices; "let us carry him over at once."

Jacques, burned up with brandy, and overcome by his interview with Cephyse, had again fallen into violent convulsions. It was the dying paroxysm of the unfortunate man. They were obliged to tie him with the ends of the cloth, so as to secure him to the leaf which was to serve for a litter, which two of the guests hastened to carry away. They yielded to the supplications of Cephyse, who asked, as a last favor, to accompany Jacques to the hospital. When the mournful procession quitted the great room of the eating-house, there was a general flight among the guests. Men and women made haste to wrap themselves in their cloaks, in order to conceal their costume. The coaches, which had been ordered in tolerable number for the return of the masquerade, had luckily arrived. The defiance had been fully carried out, the audacious *bravado* accomplished, and they could now retire with the honors of war. While a part of the guests were still in the room an uproar, at first distant, but which soon drew nearer,

broke out with incredible fury in the square of Notre-Dame.

Jacques had been carried to the outer door of the tavern. Morok and Ninny Moulin, striving to open a passage through the crowd in the direction of the Hospital, preceded the litter. A violent reflux of the multitude soon forced them to stop, while a new storm of savage outcries burst from the other extremity of the square, near the angle of the church.

"What is it, then?" asked Ninny Moulin of one of those ignoble figures that was leaping up before him. "What are those cries?"

"They are making mincemeat of a poisoner, like him they have thrown into the river," replied the man. "If you want to see the fun, follow me close," added he, "and peg away with your elbows, for fear you should be too late." Hardly had the wretch pronounced these words than a dreadful shriek resounded above the roar of the crowd, through which the bearers of the litter, preceded by Morok, were with difficulty making their way. It was Cephyse who uttered that cry. Jacques (one of the seven heirs of the Rennepont family) had just expired in her arms! By a strange fatality, at the very moment that the de-

spairing exclamation of Cephyse announced that death, another cry rose from that part of the square where they were attacking the poisoner. That distant, supplicating cry, tremulous with horrible alarm, like the last appeal of a man staggering beneath the blows of his murderers, chilled the soul of Morok in the midst of his execrable triumph.

"Damnation!" cried the skillful assassin, who had selected drunkenness and debauchery for his murderous but legal weapons; "it is the voice of the Abbe d'Aigrigny, whom they have in their clutches!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE POISONER.

It is necessary to go back a little before relating the adventure of Father d'Aigrigny, whose cry of distress made so deep an impression upon Morok just at the moment of Jacques Rennepont's death. We have said that the most absurd and alarming reports were circulating in Paris; not only did people talk of poison given to

the sick, or thrown into the public fountains, but it was also said that wretches had been surprised in the act of putting arsenic into the pots which are usually kept all ready on the counters of wine shops. Goliath was on his way to rejoin Morok, after delivering a message to Father d'Aigrigny, who was waiting in a house on the Place de l'Archeveche. He entered a wine-shop in the Rue de la Calandre, to get some refreshment, and having drunk two glasses of wine, he proceeded to pay for them. While the woman of the house was looking for change, Goliath, mechanically and very innocently, rested his hand on the mouth of one of the pots that happened to be within his reach.

The tall stature of this man and his repulsive and savage countenance had already alarmed the good woman, whose fears and prejudices had previously been roused by the public rumors on the subject of poisoning; but when she saw Goliath place his hand over the mouth of one of her pots, she cried out in dismay: "Oh! my gracious! what are you throwing into that pot?" At these words, spoken in a loud voice, and with the accent of terror, two or three of the drinkers at one of the tables rose precipitately, and ran to the

counter, while one of them rashly exclaimed: "It is a poisoner!"

Goliath, not aware of the reports circulated in the neighborhood, did not at first understand of what he was accused. The men raised their voices as they called on him to answer the charge; but he, trusting to his strength, shrugged his shoulders in disdain, and roughly demanded the change, which the pale and frightened hostess no longer thought of giving him.

"Rascal!" cried one of the men, with so much violence that several of the passers-by stopped to listen; "you shall have your change when you tell us what you threw in the pot!"

"Ha! did he throw anything into the wine-pot?" said one of the passers-by.

"It is, perhaps, a poisoner," said another.

"He ought to be taken up," added the third.

"Yes, yes," cried those in the house—honest people, perhaps, but under the influence of the general panic; "he must be taken up, for he has been throwing poison into the wine-pots."

The words "He is a poisoner!" soon spread through the group, which, at first composed of three or four persons, increased

every instant around the door of the wine-shop. A dull, menacing clamor began to rise from the crowd; the first accuser, seeing his fears thus shared and almost justified, thought he was acting like a good and courageous citizen in taking Goliath by the collar, and saying to him: "Come and explain yourself at the guard-house, villain!"

The giant, already provoked at insults of which he did not perceive the real meaning, was exasperated at this sudden attack; yielding to his natural brutality, he knocked his adversary down upon the counter and began to hammer him with his fists. During this collision, several bottles and two or three panes of glass were broken with much noise, while the woman of the house, more and more frightened, cried out with all her might: "Help! a poisoner! Help! murder!"

At the sound of the breaking windows and these cries of distress, the passers-by, of whom the greater number believed in the stories about the poisoners, rushed into the shop to aid in securing Goliath. But the latter, thanks to his herculean strength, after struggling for some moments with seven or eight persons, knocked down two of his most furious assailants, disengaged

himself from the others, drew near the counter, and, taking a vigorous spring, rushed headforemost, like a bull about to butt, upon the crowd that blocked up the door; then, forcing a passage, by the help of his enormous shoulders and athletic arms, he made his way into the street, and ran with all speed in the direction of the square of Notre-Dame, his garments torn, his head bare, and his countenance pale and full of rage. Immediately, a number of persons from among the crowd started in pursuit of Goliath, and a hundred voices exclaimed: "Stop—stop the poisoner!"

Hearing these cries, and seeing a man draw near with a wild and troubled look, a butcher, who happened to be passing with his large, empty tray on his head, threw it against Goliath's shins, and taken by surprise, he stumbled and fell. The butcher, thinking he had performed as heroic an action as if he had encountered a mad dog, flung himself on Goliath, and rolled over with him on the pavement, exclaiming: "Help! it is a poisoner! Help! help!" This scene took place not far from the Cathedral, but at some distance from the crowd which was pressing round the Hospital gate, as well as from the eating-

house in which the masquerade of the cholera then was. The day was now drawing to a close. On the piercing call of the butcher, several groups, at the head of which were Ciboule and the quarryman, flew toward the scene of the struggle, while those who had pursued the pretended poisoner from the Rue de la Calandre reached the square on their side.

At the sight of this threatening crowd advancing toward him, Goliath, while he continued to defend himself against the butcher, who held him with the tenacity of a bull-dog, felt that he was lost unless he could rid himself of this adversary before the arrival of the rest; with a furious blow of the fist, therefore, he broke the jaw of the butcher, who just then was above him, and, disengaging himself from his hold, he rose, and staggered a few steps forward. Suddenly he stopped. He saw that he was surrounded. Behind him rose the walls of the cathedral; to the right and left, and in front of him, advanced a hostile multitude. The groans uttered by the butcher, who had just been lifted from the ground covered with blood, augmented the fury of the populace.

This was a terrible moment for Goliath; still standing alone in the center of a ring

that grew smaller every second, he saw on all sides angry enemies rushing toward him, and uttering cries of death. As the wild boar turns round once or twice, before resolving to stand at bay and face the devouring pack, Goliath, struck with terror, made one or two abrupt and wavering movements. Then, as he abandoned the possibility of flight, instinct told him that he had no mercy to expect from a crowd given up to blind and savage fury—a fury the more pitiless as it was believed to be legitimate. Goliath determined, therefore, at least to sell his life dearly; he sought for a knife in his pocket, but, not finding it, he threw out his left leg in an athletic posture, and, holding up his muscular arms, hard and stiff as bars of iron, waited with intrepidity for the shock.

The first who approached Goliath was Ciboule. The hag, heated and out of breath, instead of rushing upon him, paused, stooped down, and taking off one of the large wooden shoes that she wore, hurled it at the giant's head with so much force and with so true an aim that it struck him right in the eye, which hung half out of its socket. Goliath pressed his hands to his face, and uttered a cry of excruciating pain.

"I've made him squint!" said Ciboule, with a burst of laughter.

Goliath, maddened by the pain, instead of waiting for the attack, which the mob still hesitated to begin, so greatly were they awed by his appearance of herculean strength—the only adversary worthy to cope with him being the quarryman, who had been borne to a distance by the surging of the crowd—Goliath, in his rage, rushed headlong upon the nearest. Such a struggle was too unequal to last long; but despair redoubled the Colossus's strength, and the combat was for a moment terrible. The unfortunate man did not fall at once. For some seconds, almost buried amid a swarm of furious assailants, one saw now his mighty arm rise and fall like a sledge-hammer, beating upon skulls and faces, and now his enormous head, livid and bloody, drawn back by some of the combatants hanging to his tangled hair. Here and there sudden openings and violent oscillations of the crowd bore witness to the incredible energy of Goliath's defense. But when the quarryman succeeded in reaching him, Goliath was overpowered and thrown down. A long, savage cheer in triumph announced this fall; for, under such circumstances,

to "*go under*" is "to die." Instantly a thousand breathless and angry voices repeated the cry of "Death to the poisoner!"

Then began one of those scenes of massacre and torture, worthy of cannibals, horrible to relate, and the more incredible that they happen almost always in the presence, and often with the aid of honest and humane people, who, blinded by false notions and stupid prejudices, allow themselves to be led into all sorts of barbarity, under the idea of performing an act of inexorable justice. As it frequently happens, the sight of the blood which flowed in torrents from Goliath's wounds inflamed to madness the rage of his assailants. A hundred fists struck at the unhappy man; he was stamped under foot; his face and chest were beaten in. Ever and anon, in the midst of furious cries of "Death to the poisoner!" heavy blows were audible, followed by stifled groans. It was a frightful butchery. Each individual, yielding to a sanguinary frenzy, came in turn to strike his blow, or to tear off his morsel of flesh. Women—yes, women—mothers!—came to spend their rage on this mutilated form.

There was one moment of frightful terror. With his face all bruised and covered

with mud, his garments in rags, his chest bare, red, gaping with wounds—Goliath, availing himself of a moment's weariness on the part of his assassins, who believed him already finished, succeeded, by one of those convulsive starts frequent in the last agony, in raising himself to his feet for a few seconds; then, blind with wounds and loss of blood, striking about his arms in the air as if to parry blows that were no longer struck, he muttered these words, which came from his mouth, accompanied by a crimson torrent. "Mercy! I am no poisoner. Mercy!" This sort of resurrection produced so great an effect on the crowd that for an instant they fell back affrighted. The clamor ceased, and a small space was left around the victim. Some hearts began even to feel pity; when the quarryman, seeing Goliath blinded with blood, groping before him with his hands, exclaimed in ferocious allusion to a well-known game: "Now for blind man's buff!"

Then, with a violent kick, he again threw down the victim, whose head struck twice heavily on the pavement.

Just as the giant fell a voice from among the crowd exclaimed: "It is Goliath! stop! he is innocent."

It was Father d'Aigrigny, who, yielding to a generous impulse, was making violent efforts to reach the foremost rank of the actors in this scene, and who cried out, as he came nearer, pale, indignant, menacing: "You are cowards and murderers! This man is innocent. I know him. You shall answer for his life."

These vehement words were received with loud murmurs.

"You know that poisoner," cried the quarryman, seizing the Jesuit by the collar; "then perhaps you are a poisoner too."

"Wretch," exclaimed Father d'Aigrigny, endeavoring to shake himself loose from the grasp, "do you dare to lay hands upon me?"

"Yes, I dare do anything," answered the quarryman.

"He knows him; he's a poisoner like the other," cried the crowd, pressing round the two adversaries; while Goliath, who had fractured his skull in the fall, uttered a long death-rattle.

At a sudden movement of Father d'Aigrigny, who disengaged himself from the quarryman, a large glass vial of a peculiar form, very thick, and filled with a greenish liquor, fell from his pocket and rolled close to the dying Goliath. At sight of

this vial, many voices exclaimed together: "It is poison! Only see! He had poison upon him!"

The clamor redoubled at the accusation, and they pressed so close to the Abbe d'Aigrigny that he exclaimed: "Do not touch me! do not approach me!"

"If he is a poisoner," said a voice, "no more mercy for him than for the other."

"I a poisoner?" said the abbe, struck with horror.

Ciboule had darted upon the vial; the quarryman seized it from her, uncorked it, and presenting it to Father d'Aigrigny, said to him: "Now tell us? what is that?"

"It is not poison," cried Father d'Aigrigny.

"Then drink it!" returned the quarryman.

"Yes, yes; let him drink it!" cried the mob.

"Never," answered Father d'Aigrigny, in extreme alarm. And he drew back as he spoke, pushing away the vial with his hand.

"Do you see? It *is* poison. He dares not drink it," they exclaimed. Hemmed in on every side, Father d'Aigrigny stumbled against the body of Goliath.

"My friends," cried the Jesuit, who, without being a poisoner, found himself exposed to a terrible alternative, for his

vial contained aromatic salts of extraordinary strength, designed for a preservative against the cholera, and as dangerous to swallow as any poison, "my good friends, you are in error. I conjure you, in the name of Heaven—"

"If that is not poison, drink it!" interrupted the quarryman, as he again offered the bottle to the Jesuit.

"If he does not drink it, death to the poisoner of the poor!"

"Yes!—death to him! death to him!"

"Unhappy men!" cried Father d'Aigrigny, while his hair stood on end with terror; "do you mean to murder me?"

"What about all those that you and your mate have killed, you wretch?"

"But it is not true—and—"

"Drink, then!" repeated the inflexible quarryman; "I ask you for the last time."

"To drink that would be death!" cried Father d'Aigrigny.

"Oh! only hear the wretch!" cried the mob, pressing closer to him; "he has confessed—he has confessed!" *

*This fact is historical. A man was murdered because a vial full of ammonia was found upon him. On his refusal to drink it, the populace, persuaded that the bottle contained poison, tore him to pieces.

"He has betrayed himself!"

"He said, 'To drink that would be death.'"

"But listen to me!" cried the abbe, clasping his hands together; "this vial is—"

Furious cries interrupted Father d'Aigrigny. "Ciboule, make an end of that one!" cried the quarryman, spurning Goliath with his foot. "I will begin this one!" And he seized Father d'Aigrigny by the throat.

At these words, two different groups formed themselves. One, led by Ciboule, "made an end" of Goliath, with kicks and blows, stones and wooden shoes; his body was soon reduced to a horrible thing; mutilated, nameless, formless,—a mere inert mass of filth and mangled flesh. Ciboule gave her cloak, which they tied to one of the dislocated ankles of the body, and thus dragged it to the parapet of the quay. There, with shouts of ferocious joy, they precipitated the bloody remains into the river. Now, who does not shudder at the thought that, in a time of popular commotion, a word, a single word, spoken imprudently, even by an honest man, and without hatred, will suffice to provoke so horrible a murder.

"Perhaps it is a poisoner!" said one of

the drinkers in the tavern of the Rue de la Calandre—nothing more—and Goliath had been pitilessly murdered.

What imperious reasons for penetrating the lowest depths of the masses with instruction and with light—to enable unfortunate creatures to defend themselves from so many stupid prejudices, so many fatal superstitions, so much implacable fanaticism! How can we ask for calmness, reflection, self-control, or the sentiment of justice from abandoned beings, whom ignorance has brutalized, and misery depraved, and suffering made ferocious, and of whom society takes no thought, except when it chains them to the galleys or binds them ready for the executioner! The terrible cry which had so startled Morok was uttered by Father d'Aigrigny, as the quarryman laid his formidable hand upon him, saying to Ciboule: "Make an end of that one—I will begin this one!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN THE CATHEDRAL.

Night was almost come, as the mutilated body of Goliath was thrown into the river. The oscillations of the mob had carried into the street, which runs along

the left side of the Cathedral, the group into whose power Father d'Aigrigny had fallen. Having succeeded in freeing himself from the grasp of the quarryman, but still closely pressed by the multitude that surrounded him, crying, "Death to the poisoner!" he retreated step by step, trying to parry the blows that were dealt him. By presence of mind, address and courage, recovering at that critical moment his old military energy, he had hitherto been able to resist and to remain firm on his feet, knowing, by the example of Goliath, that to fall was to die. Though he had little hope of being heard to any purpose, the abbe continued to call for help with all his might. Disputing the ground inch by inch, he maneuvered so as to draw near one of the lateral walls of the church, and at length succeeded in ensconcing himself in a corner formed by the projection of a buttress, and close by a little door.

This position was rather favorable. Leaning with his back against the wall, Father d'Aigrigny was sheltered from the attacks of a portion of his assailants. But the quarryman, wishing to deprive him of this last chance of safety, rushed upon him, with the intention of dragging him out into the circle, where he would have been

trampled under foot. The fear of death gave Father d'Aigrigny extraordinary strength, and he was able once more to repulse the quarryman, and remain intrenched in the corner where he had taken refuge. The resistance of the victim redoubled the rage of the assailants. Cries of murderous import resounded with new violence. The quarryman again rushed upon Father d'Aigrigny, saying, "Follow me, friends! this lasts too long. Let us make an end of it."

Father d'Aigrigny saw that he was lost. His strength was exhausted, and he felt himself sinking: his legs trembled under him, and a cloud obscured his sight; the howling of the furious mob began to sound dull upon his ear. The effects of violent contusions, received during the struggle, both on the head and chest, were now very perceptible. Two or three times, a mixture of blood and foam rose to the lips of the abbe; his position was a desperate one.

"To be slaughtered by these brutes, after escaping death so often in war!" Such was the thought of Father d'Aigrigny, as the quarryman rushed upon him.

Suddenly, at the very moment when the abbe, yielding to the instinct of self-preservation, uttered one last call for help, in

rous voice: "Have mercy, my brethren! Be humane—be just!"

Recovering from his first feeling of surprise and involuntary emotion, the quarryman advanced a step toward Gabriel, and said to him: "No mercy for the poisoner! we must have him. Give him up to us, or we go and take him!"

"You cannot think of it, my brethren," answered Gabriel; "the church is a sacred place—a place of refuge for the persecuted."

"We would drag our poisoner from the altar!" answered the quarryman, roughly; "so give him up to us."

"Listen to me, my brethren," said Gabriel, extending his arms toward them.

"Down with the shaveling!" cried the quarryman; "let us go in and hunt him up in the church!"

"Yes, yes!" cried the mob, again led away by the violence of this wretch, "down with the black gown!"

"They are all of a piece!"

"Down with them!"

"Let us do as we did at the archbishop's!"

"Or at Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois!"

"What do our likes care for a church?"

"If the priests defend the poisoners, we'll pitch them into the water, too!"

"Yes, yes!'

"I'll show you the lead!" cried the quarryman; and, followed by Ciboule and a good number of determined men, he rushed toward Gabriel.

The missionary, who for some moments had watched the increasing fury of the crowd, had foreseen this movement; hastily retreating into the church, he succeeded, in spite of the efforts of the assailants, in nearly closing the door, and in barricading it by the help of a wooden bar, which he held in such a manner as would enable the door to resist for a few minutes.

While he thus defended the entrance, Gabriel shouted to Father d'Aigrigny: "Fly, father! fly through the vestry! the other doors are fastened!"

The Jesuit, overpowered by fatigue, covered with contusions, bathed in cold sweat, feeling his strength altogether fail, and too soon fancying himself in safety, had sunk, half fainting, into a chair. At the voice of Gabriel, he rose with difficulty, and, with a trembling step, endeavored to reach the choir, separated from the rest of the church by an iron railing.

"Quick, father!" added Gabriel, in alarm, using every effort to maintain the door, which was now vigorously assailed.

"Make haste! In a few minutes it will be too late. All alone!" continued the missionary, in despair, "alone, to arrest the progress of these madmen!"

He was indeed alone. At the first outbreak of the attack, three or four sacristans and other members of the establishment were in the church; but, struck with terror, and remembering the attack of the archbishop's palace, and of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, they had immediately taken flight. Some of them had concealed themselves in the organ-loft, and others fled into the vestry, the doors of which they locked after them, thus cutting off the retreat of Gabriel and Father d'Aigrigny. The latter, bent double by pain, yet roused by the missionary's portentive warning, helping himself on by means of the chairs he met with on his passage, made vain efforts to reach the choir railing. After advancing a few steps, vanquished by his suffering, he staggered and fell upon the pavement, deprived of sense and motion. At the same moment, Gabriel, in spite of the incredible energy with which the desire to save Father d'Aigrigny had inspired him, felt the door giving way beneath the formidable pressure from without.

Turning his head, to see if the Jesuit had

at least quitted the church, Gabriel, to his great alarm, perceived that he was lying motionless at a few steps from the choir. To abandon the half-broken door, to run to Father d'Aigrigny, to lift him in his arms, and drag him within the railing of the choir, was for the young priest an action rapid as thought; for he closed the gate of the choir just at the instant that the quarryman and his band, having finished breaking down the door, rushed in a body into the church.

Standing in front of the choir, with his arms crossed upon his breast, Gabriel waited calmly and intrepidly for this mob, still more exasperated by such unexpected resistance.

The door once forced, the assailants rushed in with great violence. But hardly had they entered the church than a strange scene took place. It was nearly dark; only a few silver lamps shed their pale light round the sanctuary, whose far outlines disappeared in shadow. On suddenly entering the immense Cathedral, dark, silent, and deserted, the most audacious were struck with awe, almost with fear, in presence of the imposing grandeur of that stony solitude. Outcries and threats died away on the lips of the most furious. They

seemed to dread awakening the echoes of those enormous arches, those black vaults, from which oozed a sepulchral dampness, which chilled their brows, inflamed with anger, and fell upon their shoulders like a mantle of ice.

Religious tradition, routine, habit, the memories of childhood, have so much influence upon men that hardly had they entered the church than several of the quarryman's followers respectfully took off their hats, bowed their bare heads, and walked along cautiously, as if to check the noise of their footsteps on the sounding stones. Then they exchanged a few words in a low and fearful whisper. Others timidly raised their eyes to the far heights of the topmost arches of that gigantic building, now lost in obscurity, and felt almost frightened to see themselves so little in the midst of that immensity of darkness. But at the first joke of the quarryman, who broke this respectful silence, the emotion soon passed away.

"Blood and thunder!" cried he; "are you fetching breath to sing vespers? If they had wine in the font, well and good!"

These words were received with a burst of savage laughter. "All this time the villain will escape," said one.

"And we shall be done," added Ciboule.

"One would think we had cowards here who are afraid of the sacristans!" cried the quarryman.

"Never!" replied the others in chorus; "we fear nobody."

"Forward!"

"Yes, yes—forward!" was repeated on all sides. And the animation, which had been calmed down for a moment, was redoubled in the midst of renewed tumult. Some moments after, the eyes of the assailants, becoming accustomed to the twilight, were able to distinguish, in the midst of the faint halo shed around by a silver lamp, the imposing countenance of Gabriel, as he stood before the iron railing of the choir.

"The poisoner is here, hid in some corner," cried the quarryman.

"We must force this parson to give us back the villain."

"He shall answer for him."

"He took him into the church."

"He shall pay for both, if we do not find the other."

As the first impression of involuntary respect was effaced from the minds of the crowd, their voices rose the louder, and their faces became the more savage and

threatening, because they all felt ashamed of their momentary hesitation and weakness.

"Yes, yes," cried many voices, trembling with rage, "we must have the life of one or the other!"

"Or of both!"

"So much the worse for this priest, if he wants to prevent us from serving out our poisoner!"

"Death to him! death to him!"

With this burst of ferocious yells, which were fearfully re-echoed from the groined arches of the Cathedral, the mob, maddened by rage, rushed toward the choir, at the door of which Gabriel was standing. The young missionary, who, when placed on the cross by the savages of the Rocky Mountains, yet entreated Heaven to spare his executioners, had too much courage in his heart, too much charity in his soul, not to risk his life a thousand times over to save Father d'Aigrigny's—the very man who had betrayed him to such cowardly and cruel hypocrisy.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MURDERERS.

THE quarryman, followed by his gang, ran toward Gabriel, who had advanced a

few paces from the choir railing, and exclaimed, his eyes sparkling with rage: "Where is the poisoner? We will have him!"

"Who has told you, my brethren, that he is a poisoner?" replied Gabriel, with his deep, sonorous voice. "A poisoner! Where are the proofs—witnesses, or victims?"

"Enough of that stuff! we are not here for confession," brutally answered the quarryman, advancing toward him in a threatening manner. "Give up the man to us; he shall be forthcoming, unless you choose to stand in his shoes!"

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed several voices; "they are 'in' with one another! One or the other we will have!"

"Very well, then; since it is so," said Gabriel, raising his head and advancing with calmness, resignation, and fearlessness; "he or me," added he: "it seems to make no difference to you—you are determined to have blood—take mine, and I will pardon you, my friends; for a fatal delusion has unsettled your reason."

These words of Gabriel, his courage, the nobleness of his attitude, the beauty of his countenance, had made an impression on some of the assailants, when suddenly a

voice exclaimed: "Look! there is the poisoner, behind the railing!"

"Where—where?" cried they.

"There—don't you see?—stretched on the floor."

On hearing this, the mob, which had hitherto formed a compact mass, in the sort of passage separating the two sides of the nave, between the rows of chairs, dispersed in every direction to reach the railing of the choir, the last and only barrier that now sheltered Father d'Aigrigny. During this maneuver, the quarryman, Ciboule, and others advanced toward Gabriel, exclaiming, with ferocious joy: "This time we have him. Death to the poisoner!"

To save Father d'Aigrigny, Gabriel would have allowed himself to be massacred at the entrance of the choir; but, a little further on, the railing, not above four feet in height, would in another instant be scaled or broken through. The missionary lost all hope of saving the Jesuit from a frightful death. Yet he exclaimed: "Stop, poor deluded people!" and, extending his arms, he threw himself in front of the crowd.

His words, gesture, and countenance were expressive of an authority at once so

affectionate and so fraternal that there was a momentary hesitation among the mob. But to this hesitation soon succeeded the most furious cries of "Death! death!"

"You cry for his death?" cried Gabriel, growing still paler.

"Yes! yes!"

"Well, let him die," cried the missionary, inspired with a sudden thought; "let him die on the instant!"

These words of the young priest struck the crowd with amazement. For a few moments they all stood mute, motionless, and as it were paralyzed, looking at Gabriel in stupid astonishment.

"This man is guilty, you say," resumed the young missionary, in a voice trembling with emotion. "You have condemned him without proof, without witnesses—no matter, he must die. You reproach him with being a poisoner; where are his victims? You cannot tell—but no matter; he is condemned. You refuse to hear his defense, the sacred right of every accused person—no matter; the sentence is pronounced. You are at once his accusers, judges, and executioners. Be it so! You have never seen till now this unfortunate man, he has done you no harm, he has, perhaps, not done harm to any one—yet you take upon

yourselves the terrible responsibility of his death—understand me well—of his death. Be it so then! your conscience will absolve you—I will believe it. He must die; the sacredness of God's house will not save him—"

"No, no!" cried many furious voices.

"No," resumed Gabriel, with increasing warmth; "no, you have determined to shed his blood, and you will shed it, even in the Lord's temple. It is, you say, your right. You are doing an act of terrible justice. But why then so many vigorous arms to make an end of one dying man? Why these outcries? this fury? this violence? Is it thus that the people, the strong and equitable people, are wont to execute their judgments? No, no; when, sure of their right, they strike their enemies, it is with the calmness of the judge, who, in freedom of soul and conscience, passes sentence. No, the strong and equitable people do not deal their blows like men blind or mad, uttering cries of rage, as if to drown the sense of some cowardly and horrible murder. No, it is not thus that they exercise the formidable right, to which you now lay claim—for you will have it—"

"Yes, we will have it!" shouted the quarryman, Ciboule, and others of the

more pitiless portion of the mob; while a great number remained silent, struck with the words of Gabriel, who had just painted to them, in such lively colors, the frightful act they were about to commit.

"Yes," resumed the quarryman, "it is our right; we have determined to kill the poisoner!"

So saying, and with bloodshot eyes and flushed cheek, the wretch advanced at the head of a resolute group, making a gesture as though he would have pushed aside Gabriel, who was still standing in front of the railing. But, instead of resisting the bandit, the missionary advanced a couple of steps to meet him, took him by the arm, and said in a firm voice: "Come!"

And dragging, as it were, with him the stupefied quarryman, whose companions did not venture to follow at the moment, struck dumb as they were by this new incident, Gabriel rapidly traversed the space which separated him from the choir, opened the iron gate, and, still holding the quarryman by the arm, led him up to the prostrate form of Father d'Aigrigny, and said to him: "There is the victim. He is condemned. Strike!"

"I!" cried the quarryman, hesitating; "I—all alone!"

"Oh!" replied Gabriel, with bitterness, "there is no danger. You can easily finish him. Look! he is broken down with suffering; he has hardly a breath of life left; he will make no resistance. Do not be afraid!"

The quarryman remained motionless, while the crowd, strangely impressed with this incident, approached a little nearer the railing, without daring to come within the gate.

"Strike, then!" resumed Gabriel, addressing the quarryman, while he pointed to the crowd with a solemn gesture; "there are the judges; you are the executioner."

"No!" cried the quarryman, drawing back, and turning away his eyes; "I'm not the executioner—not I!"

The crowd remained silent. For a few moments, not a word, not a cry, disturbed the stillness of the solemn Cathedral. In a desperate case, Gabriel had acted with a profound knowledge of the human heart. When the multitude, inflamed with blind rage, rushes with ferocious clamor upon a single victim, and each man strikes his blow, this dreadful species of combined murder appears less horrible to each, because they all share in the common crime; and then the shouts, the sight of blood, the

desperate defense of the man they massacre, finish by producing a sort of ferocious intoxication; but, among all those furious madmen, who take part in the homicide, select one, and place him face to face with the victim, no longer capable of resistance, and say to him, "Strike!" he will hardly ever dare to do so.

It was thus with the quarryman; the wretch trembled at the idea of committing a murder in cold blood, "all alone." The preceding scene had passed very rapidly; among the companions of the quarryman, nearest to the railing, some did not understand an impression, which they would themselves have felt as strongly as this bold man, if it had been said to them: "Do the office of executioner!" These, therefore, began to murmur aloud at his weakness. "He dares not finish the poisoner," said one.

"The coward!"

"He is afraid."

"He draws back."

Hearing these words, the quarryman ran to the gate, threw it wide open, and, pointing to Father d'Aigrigny, exclaimed: "If there is one here braver than I am, let him go and finish the job—let him be the executioner—come!"

On this proposal the murmurs ceased. A deep silence reigned once more in the Cathedral. All those countenances, but now so furious, became sad, confused, almost frightened. The deluded mob began to appreciate the ferocious cowardice of the action it had been about to commit. Not one durst go alone to strike the half-expiring man. Suddenly, Father d'Aigrigny uttered a dying rattle, his head and one of his arms stirred with a convulsive movement, and then fell back upon the stones as if he had just expired.

Gabriel uttered a cry of anguish, and threw himself on his knees close to Father d'Aigrigny, exclaiming: "Great Heaven! he is dead!"

There is a singular variableness in the mind of a crowd, susceptible alike to good or evil impressions. At the heart-piercing cry of Gabriel, all these people, who, a moment before, had demanded with loud uproar the massacre of this man, felt touched with a sudden pity. The words "He is dead!" circulated in low whispers through the crowd, accompanied by a slight shudder, while Gabriel raised with one hand the victim's heavy head, and with the other sought to feel if the pulse still beat beneath the ice-cold skin.

"Mr. Curate," said the quarryman, bending toward Gabriel, "is there really no hope?"

The answer was waited for with anxiety, in the midst of deep silence. The people hardly ventured to exchange a few words in whispers.

"Blessed be God!" exclaimed Gabriel, suddenly. "His heart beats."

"His heart beats," repeated the quarryman, turning his head toward the crowd, to inform them of the good news.

"Oh! his heart beats!" repeated the others, in whispers.

"There is hope. We may yet save him," added Gabriel, with an expression of indescribable happiness.

"We may yet save him," repeated the quarryman, mechanically.

"We may yet save him," muttered the crowd.

"Quick, quick," resumed Gabriel, addressing the quarryman: "help me, brother. Let us carry him to a neighboring house, where he can have immediate aid."

The quarryman obeyed with readiness. While the missionary lifted Father d'Aigrigny by holding him under the arms, the quarryman took the legs of the almost

inanimate body. Together, they carried him outside of the choir. At sight of the formidable quarryman, aiding the young priest to render assistance to the man whom he had just before pursued with menaces of death, the multitude felt a sudden thrill of compassion. Yielding to the powerful influence of the words and example of Gabriel, they felt themselves deeply moved, and each became anxious to offer his services.

"Mr. Curate, he would perhaps be better on a chair, that one could carry upright," said Ciboule.

"Shall I go and fetch a stretcher from the hospital?" asked another.

"Mr. Curate, let me take your place; the body is too heavy for you."

"Don't trouble yourself," said a powerful man, approaching the missionary respectfully; "I can carry him alone."

"Shall I run and fetch a coach, Mr. Curate?" said a young vagabond, taking off his red cap.

"Right," said the quarryman; "run away, my buck!"

"But first, ask Mr. Curate if you are to go for a coach," said Ciboule, stopping the impatient messenger.

"True," added one of the bystanders;

"we are here in a church, and Mr. Curate has the command. He is at home."

"Yes, yes; go at once, my child," said Gabriel to the obliging young vagabond.

While the latter was making his way through the crowd, a voice said: "I've a little wicker-bottle of brandy; will that be of any use?"

"No doubt," answered Gabriel, hastily; "pray give it here. We can rub his temples with the spirit, and make him inhale a little."

"Pass the bottle," cried Ciboule; "but don't put your noses in it!" And, passed with caution from hand to hand, the flask reached Gabriel in safety.

While waiting for the coming of the coach, Father d'Aigrigny had been seated on a chair. While several good-natured people carefully supported the abbe, the missionary made him inhale a little brandy. In a few minutes, the spirit had a powerful influence on the Jesuit; he made some slight movements, and his oppressed bosom heaved with a deep sigh.

"He is saved—he will live," cried Gabriel, in a triumphant voice; "he will live, my brothers!"

"Oh! glad to hear it!" exclaimed many voices.

"Oh, yes! be glad, my brothers!" repeated Gabriel; "for, instead of being weighed down with the remorse of crime, you will have a just and charitable action to remember. Let us thank God that He has changed your blind fury into a sentiment of compassion! Let us pray to Him that neither you, nor those you love, may ever be exposed to such frightful danger as this unfortunate man has just escaped. Oh, my brothers!" added Gabriel, as he pointed to the image of Christ with touching emotion, which communicated itself the more easily to others from the expression of his angelic countenance; "oh, my brothers! let us never forget, that HE, who died upon that cross for the defense of the oppressed, for the obscure children of the people like to ourselves, pronounced those affectionate words so sweet to the heart: 'Love ye one another!' Let us never forget it; let us love and help one another, and we poor people shall then become better, happier, just. Love—yes, love ye one another—and fall prostrate before that Saviour, who is the God of all that are weak, oppressed, and suffering in this world!"

So saying, Gabriel knelt down. All present respectfully followed his example,

such power was there in his simple and persuasive words. At this moment, a singular incident added to the grandeur of the scene. We have said that a few seconds before the quarryman and his band entered the body of the church, several persons had fled from it. Two of these had taken refuge in the organ-loft, from which retreat they had viewed the preceding scene, themselves remaining invisible. One of these persons was a young man, charged with the care of the organ, and quite musician enough to play on it. Deeply moved by the unexpected turn of an event which at first appeared so tragical, and yielding to an artistical inspiration, this young man, at the moment when he saw the people kneeling with Gabriel, could not forbear striking the notes. Then a sort of harmonious sigh, at first almost insensible, seemed to rise from the midst of this immense cathedral, like a divine aspiration. As soft and aerial as the balmy vapor of incense, it mounted and spread through the lofty arches. Little by little, the faint, sweet sounds, though still as it were covered, changed to an exquisite melody, religious, melancholy, and affectionate, which rose to Heaven like a song of ineffable gratitude and love. And

the notes were at first so faint, so covered, that the kneeling multitude had scarcely felt surprise, and had yielded insensibly to the irresistible influence of that enchanting harmony.

Then many an eye until now dry and ferocious, became wet with tears—many hard hearts beat gently as they remembered the words pronounced by Gabriel with so tender an accent: "Love ye one another!" It was at this moment that Father d'Aigrigny came to himself—and opened his eyes. He thought himself under the influence of a dream. He had lost his senses in sight of a furious populace, who, with insult and blasphemy on their lips, pursued him with cries of death even to the sanctuary of the temple. He opened his eyes—and, by the pale light of the sacred lamps, to the solemn music of the organ, he saw that crowd, just now so menacing and implacable, kneeling in mute and reverential emotion, and humbly bowing their heads before the majesty of the shrine.

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Some minutes after, Gabriel, carried almost in triumph on the shoulders of the crowd, entered the coach, in which Father d'Aigrigny, who by degrees had complete-

ly recovered his senses, was already reclining. By the order of the Jesuit, the coach stopped before the door of a house in the Rue de Vaugirard; he had the strength and courage to enter this dwelling alone; Gabriel was not admitted, but we shall conduct the reader thither.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PATIENT.

At the end of the Rue de Vaugirard there was then a very high wall, with only one small doorway in all its length. On opening this door, you entered a yard surrounded by a railing, with screens like Venetian blinds, to prevent your seeing between the rails. Crossing this court-yard, you come to a fine large garden, symmetrically planted, at the end of which stood a building two stories high, looking perfectly comfortable, without luxury, but with all that cozy simplicity which betokens discreet opulence. A few days had elapsed since Father d'Aigrigny had been so courageously rescued by Gabriel from the popular fury. Three ecclesiastics, wearing black gowns, white bands, and square caps, were walking in the garden with a slow and measured step. The youngest seemed

to be about thirty years of age; his countenance was pale, hollow, and impressed with a certain ascetic austerity. His two companions, aged between fifty or sixty, had, on the contrary, faces at once hypocritical and cunning; their round, rosy cheeks shone brightly in the sunshine, while their triple chins, buried in fat, descended in soft folds over the fine cambric of their bands. According to the rules of their Order (they belonged to the Society of Jesus), which forbade their walking only two together, these three members of the brotherhood never quitted each other a moment.

"I fear," said one of the two, continuing a conversation already begun, and speaking of an absent person, "I fear, that the continual agitation to which the reverend father has been a prey, ever since he was attacked with the cholera, has exhausted his strength, and caused the dangerous relapse which now makes us fear for his life."

"They say," resumed the other, "that never was there seen anxiety like to his."

"And moreover," remarked the young priest, bitterly, "it is painful to think that his reverence Father Rodin has given cause for scandal, by obstinately refusing to

make a public confession, the day before yesterday, when his situation appeared so desperate, that, between two fits of delirium, it was thought right to propose to him to receive the last sacraments."

"His reverence declared that he was not so ill as they supposed," answered one of the fathers, "and that he would have the last duties performed when he thought necessary."

"The fact is, that for the last ten days, ever since he was brought here dying, his life has been, as it were, only a long and painful agony; yet he continues to live."

"I watched by him during the first three days of his malady with M. Rousselet, the pupil of Dr. Baleinier," resumed the youngest father; "he had hardly a moment's consciousness, and when the Lord did grant him a lucid interval, he employed it in detestable execrations against the fate which had confined him to his bed."

"It is said," resumed the other, "that Father Rodin made answer to his Eminence Cardinal Malipieri, who came to persuade him to die in an exemplary manner, worthy of a son of Loyola, our blessed founder"—at these words, the three Jesuits bowed their heads together, as if they had been all moved by the same spring—"it is

said that Father Rodin made answer to his Eminence: 'I do not need to confess publicly; I WANT TO LIVE, AND I *will* LIVE.' "

"I did not hear that," said the young priest, with an indignant air; "but if Father Rodin really made use of such expressions, it is—"

Here, no doubt, reflection came to him just in time, for he stole a sidelong glance at his two silent, impassible companions, and added: "It is a great misfortune for his soul; but I am certain his reverence has been slandered."

"It was only as a calumnious report that I mentioned those words," said the other priest, exchanging a glance with his companion.

One of the garden gates opened, and one of the three reverend fathers exclaimed, at sight of the personage who now entered: "Oh! here is his Eminence Cardinal Malipieri, coming to pay a visit to Father Rodin."

"May this visit of his Eminence," said the young priest, calmly, "be more profitable to Father Rodin than the last!"

Cardinal Malipieri was crossing the garden, on his way to the apartment occupied by Rodin.

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THE PUPIL OF DR. BALEINIER.

—The Wandering Jew, Vol. 4, p. 504.

Cardinal Malipieri, whom we saw assisting at the sort of council held at the Princess de Saint-Dizier's, now on his way to Rodin's apartment, was dressed as a layman, but enveloped in an ample pelisse of puce-colored satin, which exhaled a strong odor of camphor, for the prelate had taken care to surround himself with all sorts of anti-cholera specifics. Having reached the second story of the house, the cardinal knocked at a little gray door. Nobody answering, he opened it, and, like a man to whom the locality was well known, passed through a sort of antechamber, and entered a room in which was a turn-up bed. On a black wood table were many vials, which had contained different medicines. The prelate's countenance seemed uneasy and morose; his complexion was still yellow and bilious; the brown circle which surrounded his black, squinting eyes appeared still darker than usual.

Pausing a moment, he looked round him almost in fear, and several times stopped to smell at his anti-cholera bottle. Then, seeing he was alone, he approached a glass over the chimney-piece, and examined with much attention the color of his tongue; after some minutes spent in this careful investigation, with the result

of which he appeared tolerably satisfied, he took some preservative lozenges out of a golden box, and allowed them to melt in his mouth, while he closed his eyes with a sanctified air. Having taken these sanitary precautions, and again pressed his bottle to his nose, the prelate prepared to enter the third room, when he heard a tolerably loud noise through the thin partition which separated him from it, and, stopping to listen, all that was said in the next apartment easily reached his ear.

"Now that my wounds are dressed, I will get up," said a weak, but sharp and imperious voice.

"Do not think of it, reverend father," was answered in a stronger tone; "it is impossible."

"You shall see if it is impossible," replied the other voice.

"But, reverend father, you will kill yourself. You are not in a state to get up. You will expose yourself to a mortal relapse. I cannot consent to it."

To these words succeeded the noise of a faint struggle, mingled with groans more angry than plaintive, and the voice resumed: "No, no, father; for your own safety, I will not leave your clothes within your reach. It is almost time for your

medicine; I will go and prepare it for you."

Almost immediately after the door opened, and the prelate saw enter a man of about twenty-five years of age, carrying on his arm an old olive greatcoat and threadbare black trousers, which he threw down upon a chair.

This personage was Ange Modeste Rousselet, chief pupil of Dr. Baleinier; the countenance of the young practitioner was mild, humble and reserved; his hair, very short in front, flowed down upon his neck behind. He made a slight start in surprise on perceiving the cardinal, and bowed twice very low, without raising his eyes.

"Before anything else," said the prelate, with his marked Italian accent, still holding to his nose his bottle of camphor, "have any choleraic symptoms returned?"

"No, my lord; the pernicious fever, which succeeded the attack of cholera, still continues."

"Very good. But will not the reverend father be reasonable? What was the noise that I just heard?"

"His reverence wished absolutely to get up and dress himself; but his weakness is so great that he could not have taken two steps from the bed. He is devoured by

impatience, and we fear that this agitation will cause a mortal relapse."

"Has Dr. Baleinier been here this morning?"

"He has just left, my lord."

"What does he think of the patient?"

"He finds him in the most alarming state, my lord. The night was so bad that he was extremely uneasy this morning. Father Rodin is at one of those critical junctures, when a few hours may decide the life or death of the patient. Dr. Baleinier is now gone to fetch what is necessary for a very painful operation, which he is about to perform on the reverend father."

"Has Father d'Aigrigny been told of this?"

"Father d'Aigrigny is himself very unwell, as your eminence knows; he has not been able to leave his bed for the last three days."

"I inquired about him as I came up," answered the prelate, "and I shall see him directly. But, to return to Father Rodin, have you sent for his confessor, since he is in a desperate state, and about to undergo a serious operation?"

"Dr. Baleinier spoke a word to him about it, as well as about the last sacra-

ments; but Father Rodin exclaimed, with great irritation, that they did not leave him a moment's peace, that he had as much care as any one for his salvation, and that—"

"Per Bacco! I am not thinking of him," cried the cardinal, interrupting Ange Modeste Rousselet with his pagan oath, and raising his sharp voice to a still higher key; "I am not thinking of him, but of the interests of the Company. It is indispensable that the reverend father should receive the sacraments with the most splendid solemnity, and that his end should not only be Christian, but exemplary. All the people in the house, and even strangers, should be invited to the spectacle, so that his edifying death may produce an excellent sensation."

"That is what Fathers Grison and Brunet have already endeavored to persuade his reverence, my lord; but your Eminence knows with what impatience Father Rodin received this advice, and Dr. Baleinier did not venture to persist, for fear of advancing a fatal crisis."

"Well, I will venture to do it; for in these times of revolutionary impiety, a solemnly Christian death would produce a very salutary effect on the public. It

would indeed be proper to make the necessary preparations to embalm the reverend father; he might then lie in state for some days, with lighted tapers, according to Romish custom. My secretary would furnish the design for the bier; it would be very splendid and imposing; from his position in the Order, Father Rodin is entitled to have everything in the most sumptuous style. He must have at least six hundred tapers, and a dozen funeral lamps, burning spirits of wine, to hang just over the body and light it from above: the effect would be excellent. We must also distribute little tracts to the people, concerning the pious and ascetic life of his reverence—"

Here a sudden noise, like that of some piece of metal thrown angrily on the floor, was heard from the next room, in which was the sick man, and interrupted the prelate in his description.

"I hope Father Rodin has not heard you talk of embalming him, my lord," said Rousselet, in a whisper; "his bed touches the partition, and almost everything is audible through it."

"If Father Rodin has heard me," answered the cardinal, sinking his voice and retiring to the other end of the room, "this

circumstance will enable me to enter at once on the business; but, in any case, I persist in believing that the embalming and the lying in state are required to make a good effect upon the public. The people are already frightened at the cholera, and such funeral pomp would have no small influence on the imagination."

"I would venture to observe to your Eminence that here the laws are opposed to such exhibitions."

"The laws—always the laws!" said the cardinal, angrily; "has not Rome also her laws? And is not every priest a subject of Rome? Is it not time—"

But, not choosing, doubtless, to begin a more explicit conversation with the young doctor, the prelate resumed, "We will talk of this hereafter. But, tell me, since my last visit has the reverend father had any fresh attacks of delirium?"

"Yes, my lord; here is the note, as your Eminence commanded." So saying, Rousselet delivered a paper to the prelate. We will inform the reader that this part of the conversation between Rousselet and the cardinal was carried on at a distance from the partition, so that Rodin could hear nothing of it, while that which related to the embalming had been perfectly audible

to him. The cardinal, having received the note from Rousselet, perused it with an expression of lively curiosity. When he had finished, he crumpled it in his hand and said, without attempting to dissemble his vexation: "Always nothing but incoherent expressions. Not two words together, from which you can draw any reasonable conclusion. One would really think this man has the power to control himself even in his delirium, and to rave about insignificant matters only."

Then, addressing Rousselet, "You are sure that you have reported everything that escaped from him during his delirium?"

"With the exception of the same phrases, that he repeated over and over again, your Eminence may be assured that I have not omitted a single word, however unmeaning."

"Show me into Father Rodin's room," said the prelate, after a moment's silence.

"But, my lord," answered the young doctor, with some hesitation, "the fit has only left him about an hour, and the reverend father is still very weak."

"The more's the reason," replied the prelate, somewhat indiscreetly. Then, recollecting himself, he added, "He will

the better appreciate the consolations I have to offer. Should he be asleep, awake him, and announce my visit."

"I have only orders to receive from your Eminence," said Rousselet, bowing, and entering the next room.

Left alone, the cardinal said to himself, with a pensive air, "I always come back to that. When he was suddenly attacked by the cholera, Father Rodin believed himself poisoned by order of the Holy See. He must then have been plotting something very formidable against Rome, to entertain so abominable a fear. Can our suspicions be well founded? Is he acting secretly and powerfully on the Sacred College? But then for what end? This it has been impossible to penetrate, so faithfully has the secret been kept by his accomplices. I had hoped that, during his delirium, he would let slip some word that would put us on the track of what we are so much interested to discover. With so restless and active a mind, delirium is often the exaggeration of some dominant idea; yet here I have the report of five different fits—and nothing—no, nothing but vague, unconnected phrases."

The return of Rousselet put an end to these reflections. "I am sorry to inform

my lord that the reverend father obstinately refuses to see any one. He says that he requires absolute repose. Though very weak, he has a savage and angry look, and I should not be surprised if he overheard your Eminence talk about embalming him."

The cardinal, interrupting Bousseelt, said to him, "Did Father Rodin have his last fit of delirium in the night?"

"Between three and half-past five this morning, my lord."

"Between three and half-past five," repeated the prelate, as if he wished to impress this circumstance on his memory; "the attack presented no particular symptoms?"

"No, my lord; it consisted of rambling, incoherent talk, as your Eminence may see by this note."

Then, as he perceived the prelate approaching Father Rodin's door, Rousselet added, "The reverend father will positively see no one, my lord; he requires rest, to prepare for the operation; it might be dangerous—"

Without attending to these observations, the cardinal entered Rodin's chamber. It was a tolerably large room, lighted by two windows, and simply but commodiously

furnished. Two logs were burning slowly in the fireplace, in which stood a coffee-pot, a vessel containing a mustard-poultice, etc. On the chimney-piece were several pieces of rag, and some linen bandages. The room was full of that faint, chemical odor peculiar to the chambers of the sick, mingled with so putrid a stench that the cardinal stopped at the door a moment, before he ventured to advance further. As the three reverend fathers had mentioned in their walk, Rodin lived because he had said to himself, "I want to live, and I will live."

For, as men of timid imaginations and cowardly minds often die from the mere dread of dying, so a thousand facts prove that a vigor of character and moral energy may often struggle successfully against disease, and triumph over the most desperate symptoms.

It was thus with the Jesuit. The unshaken firmness of his character, the formidable tenacity of his will (for the will has sometimes a mysterious and almost terrific power), aiding the skillful treatment of Dr. Baleinier, had saved him from the pestilence with which he had been so suddenly attacked. But the shock had been succeeded by a violent fever,

which placed Rodin's life in the utmost peril. This increased danger had caused the greatest alarm to Father d'Aigrigny, who felt, in spite of his rivalry and jealousy, that Rodin was the master-spirit of the plot in which they were engaged, and could alone conduct it to a successful issue.

The curtains of the room were half closed, and admitted only a doubtful light to the bed on which Rodin was lying. The Jesuit's features had lost the greenish hue peculiar to cholera patients, but remained perfectly livid and cadaverous, and so thin, that the dry, rugged skin appeared to cling to the smallest prominence of bone. The muscles and veins of the long, lean, vulture-like neck resembled a bundle of cords. The head, covered with an old, black, filthy nightcap, from beneath which strayed a few thin, gray hairs, rested upon a dirty pillow; for Rodin would not allow them to change his linen. His iron-gray beard had not been shaved for some time, and stood out like the hairs of a brush. Under his shirt he wore an old flannel waistcoat full of holes. He had one of his arms out of bed, and his bony hairy hand, with its bluish nails, held fast a cotton handkerchief of indescribable color.

You might have taken him for a corpse,

had it not been for the two brilliant sparks which still burned in the depths of his eyes. In that look, in which seemed concentred all the remaining life and energy of the man, you might read the most restless anxiety. Sometimes his features revealed the sharpest pangs; sometimes the twisting of his hands, and his sudden starts, proclaimed his despair at being thus fettered to a bed of pain, while the serious interests which he had in charge required all the activity of his mind. Thus, with thoughts continually on the stretch, his mind often wandered, and he had fits of dleirium, from which he woke as from a painful dream. By the prudent advice of Dr. Baleinier, who considered him not in a state to attend to matters of importance, Father d'Aigrigny had hitherto evaded Rodin's questions with regard to the Rennepont affair, which he dreaded to see lost and ruined in consequence of his forced inaction. The silence of Father d'Aigrigny on this head, and the ignorance in which they kept him, only augmented the sick man's exasperation. Such was the moral and physical state of Rodin, when Cardinal Malipieri entered his chamber against his will.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LURE.

To understand fully the tortures of Rodin, reduced to inactivity by sickness, and to explain the importance of Cardinal Malipieri's visit, we must remember the audacious views of the ambitious Jesuit, who believed himself following in the steps of Sixtus V., and expected to become his equal. By the success of the Rennepont affair, to attain to the generalship of his Order, by the corruption of the Sacred College to ascend the pontifical throne, and then, by means of a change in the statutes of the Company, to incorporate the Society of Jesus with the Holy See, instead of leaving it independent, to equal and almost always rule the Papacy—such were the secret projects of Rodin.

Their possibility was sanctioned by numerous precedents, for many mere monks and priests had been suddenly raised to the pontifical dignity. And as for their morality, the accession of the Borgias, of Julius II., and other dubious Vicars of Christ,

might excuse and authorize the pretensions of the Jesuit.

Though the object of his secret intrigues at Rome had hitherto been enveloped in the greatest mystery, suspicions had been excited in regard to his private communications with many members of the Sacred College. A portion of that college, Cardinal Malipieri at the head of them, had become very uneasy on the subject, and, profiting by his journey to France, the cardinal had resolved to penetrate the Jesuit's dark designs. If, in the scene we have just painted, the cardinal showed himself obstinately bent on having a conference with Rodin, in spite of the refusal of the latter, it was because the prelate hoped, as we soon shall see, to get by cunning at the secret which had hitherto been so well concealed. It was, therefore, in the midst of all these extraordinary circumstances that Rodin saw himself the victim of a malady, which paralyzed his strength at the moment when he had need of all his activity, and of all the resources of his mind. After remaining for some seconds motionless near the door, the cardinal, still holding his bottle under his nose, slowly approached the bed where Rodin lay. The latter, enraged at this

perseverance, and wishing to avoid an interview which for many reasons was singularly odious to him, turned his face toward the wall and pretended to be asleep. Caring little for this feint, and determined to profit by Rodin's state of weakness, the prelate took a chair, and, conquering his repugnance, sat down close to the Jesuit's bed.

"My reverend and very dear father, how do you find yourself?" said he to him, in a honeyed tone, which his Italian accent seemed to render still more hypocritical. Rodin pretended not to hear, breathed hard, and made no answer. But the cardinal, not without disgust, shook with his gloved hand the arm of the Jesuit, and repeated in a louder voice: "My reverend and very dear father, answer me, I conjure you!"

Rodin could not restrain a movement of angry impatience, but he continued silent. The cardinal was not a man to be discouraged by so little; he again shook the arm of the Jesuit, somewhat more roughly, repeating, with a passionless tenacity that would have incensed the most patient person in the world: "My reverend and very dear father, since you are not asleep, listen to me, I entreat of you."

Irritable with pain, exasperated by the obstinacy of the prelate, Rodin abruptly turned his head, fixed on the Roman his hollow eyes, shining with a lurid fire, and, with lips contracted by a sardonic smile, said to him, bitterly: "You must be very anxious, my lord, to see me embalmed, and lie in state with tapers, as you were saying just now, for you thus to come to torment me in my last moments, and hasten my end!"

"Oh, my good father! how can you talk so?" cried the cardinal, raising his hands as if to call Heaven to witness to the sincerity of the tender interest he felt for the Jesuit.

"I tell you that I heard all just now, my lord; for the partition is thin," added Rodin, with redoubled bitterness.

"If you mean that, from the bottom of my soul, I desired that you should make an exemplary and Christian end, you are perfectly right, my dear father. I did say so; for, after a life so well employed, it would be sweet to see you an object of adoration for the faithful!"

"I tell you, my lord," cried Rodin, in a weak and broken voice, "that it is ferocious to express such wishes in the presence of a dying man. Yes," he added,

with growing animation, that contrasted strongly with his weakness, "take care what you do; for if I am too much plagued and pestered—if I am not allowed to breathe my last breath quietly—I give you notice that you will force me to die in anything but a Christian manner, and if you mean to profit by an edifying spectacle, you will be deceived."

This burst of anger having greatly fatigued Rodin, his head fell back upon the pillow, and he wiped his cracked and bleeding lips with his old cotton handkerchief.

"Come, come, be calm, my very dear father," resumed the cardinal, with a patronizing air; "do not give way to such gloomy ideas. Doubtless, Providence reserves you for great designs, since you have been already delivered from so much peril. Let us hope that you will be likewise saved from your present danger."

Rodin answered by a hoarse growl, and turned his face toward the wall.

The imperturbable prelate continued: "The views of Providence are not confined to your salvation, my very dear father. Its power has been manifested in another way. What I am about to tell you is of the highest importance. Listen attentively."

Without turning his head, Rodin muttered in a tone of angry bitterness, which betrayed his intense sufferings: "They desire my death. My chest is on fire, my head racked with pain, and they have no pity. Oh, I suffer the tortures of the damned!"

"What! *already?*" thought the Roman, with a smile of sarcastic malice; then he said aloud: "Let me persuade you, my very dear father—make an effort to listen to me; you will not regret it."

Still stretched upon the bed, Rodin lifted his hands clasped upon his cotton handkerchief with a gesture of despair, and then let them fall again by his side.

The cardinal slightly shrugged his shoulders, and laid great stress on what follows, so that Rodin might not lose a word of it: "My dear father, it has pleased Providence that, during your fit of raving, you have made, without knowing it, the most important revelations."

The prelate waited with anxious curiosity for the effect of the pious trap he had laid for the Jesuit's weakened faculties. But the latter, still turned toward the wall, did not appear to have heard him, and remained silent.

"You are, no doubt, reflecting on my

words, my dear father," resumed the cardinal; "you are right, for it concerns a very serious affair. I repeat to you that Providence has allowed you, during your delirium, to betray your most secret thoughts—happily, to me alone. They are such as would compromise you in the highest degree. In short, during your delirium of last night, which lasted nearly two hours, you unveiled the secret objects of your intrigues at Rome with many of the members of the Sacred College."

The cardinal, rising softly, stooped over the bed to watch the expression of Rodin's countenance. But the latter did not give him time. As a galvanized corpse starts into strange and sudden motion, Rodin sprung into a sitting posture at the last words of the prelate.

"He has betrayed himself," said the cardinal, in a low voice, in Italian. Then, resuming his seat, he fixed on the Jesuit his eyes, that sparkled with triumphant joy.

Though he did not hear the exclamation of Malipieri, nor remark the expression of his countenance, Rodin, notwithstanding his state of weakness, instantly felt the imprudence of his start. He pressed his hand to his forehead, as though he had been seized with a giddiness; then, looking wildly round him, he pressed to his trembling lips his old cotton handkerchief, and *gnawed* it mechanically for some seconds.

"Your emotion and alarm confirm the sad discoveries I have made," resumed the

cardinal, still more rejoicing at the success of his trick; "and now, my dear father," added he, "you will understand that it is for your best interest to enter into the most minute detail as to your projects and accomplices at Rome. You may then hope, my dear father, for the indulgence of the Holy See—that is, if your avowals are sufficiently explicit to fill up the chasms necessarily left in a confession made during delirium."

Rodin, recovered from his first surprise, perceived, but too late, that he had fallen into a snare, not by any words he had spoken, but by his too significant movements. In fact, the Jesuit had feared for a moment that he might have betrayed himself during his delirium, when he heard himself accused of dark intrigues with Rome; but, after some minutes of reflection, his common sense suggested: "If this crafty Roman knew my secret, he would take care not to tell me so. He has only suspicions, confirmed by my involuntary start just now."

Rodin wiped the cold sweat from his burning forehead. The emotion of this scene augmented his sufferings, and aggravated the danger of his condition. Worn out with fatigue, he could not remain long in a sitting posture, and soon fell back upon the bed.

"Per Bacco!" said the cardinal to himself, alarmed at the expression of the Jesuit's face; "if he were to die before he has spoken, and so escape the snare!"

Then, leaning over the bed, the prelate asked: "What is the matter, my very dear father?"

"I am weak, my lord—I am in pain—I cannot express what I suffer."

"Let us hope, my very dear father, that this crisis will have no fatal results; but the contrary may happen, and it behooves the salvation of your soul to make instantly the fullest confession. Were it even to exhaust your strength, what is this perishable body compared to eternal life?"

"Of what confession do you speak, my lord?" said Rodin, in a feeble and yet sarcastic tone.

"What confession!" cried the amazed cardinal; "why, with regard to your dangerous intrigues at Rome."

"What intrigues?" asked Rodin.

"The intrigues you revealed during your delirium," replied the prelate, with still more angry impatience. "Were not your avowals sufficiently explicit? Why, then, this culpable hesitation to complete them?"

"My avowals—were explicit—you assure me?" said Rodin, pausing after each word for want of breath, but without losing his energy and presence of mind.

"Yes, I repeat it," resumed the cardinal; "with the exception of a few chasms, they were most explicit."

"Then why repeat them?" said Rodin, with the same sardonic smile on his violet lips.

"Why repeat them?" cried the angry prelate. "In order to gain pardon; for if

there is indulgence and mercy for the repentant sinner, there must be condemnation and curses for the hardened criminal!"

"Oh, what torture! I am dying by slow fire!" murmured Rodin. "Since I have told all," he resumed, "I have nothing more to tell. You know it already."

"I know all—doubtless, I know all," replied the prelate, in a voice of thunder; "but how have I learned it? By confessions made in a state of unconsciousness. Do you think they will avail you anything? No; the moment is solemn—death is at hand; tremble to die with a sacrilegious falsehood on your lips," cried the prelate, shaking Rodin violently by the arm; "dread the eternal flames, if you dare deny what you know to be the truth. Do you deny it?"

"I deny nothing," murmured Rodin, with difficulty. "Only leave me alone!"

"Then Heaven inspires you," said the cardinal, with a sigh of satisfaction; and, thinking he had nearly attained his object, he resumed: "Listen to the divine word, that will guide you, father. You deny nothing?"

"I was—delirious—and cannot—(oh! how I suffer!)" added Rodin by way of parenthesis; "and cannot therefore—deny—the nonsense—I may have uttered!"

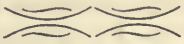
"But when this nonsense agrees with the truth," cried the prelate, furious at being again deceived in his expectation; "but when raving is an involuntary, providential revelation—"

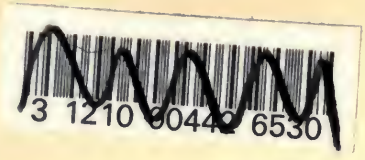
"Cardinal Malipieri—your craft is no match—for my agony," answered Rodin, in a failing voice. "The proof—that I have not told my secret—if I have a secret—is—that you want to make me tell it!" In spite of his pain and weakness, the Jesuit had courage to raise himself in the bed and look the cardinal full in the face with a smile of bitter irony. After which he fell back on the pillow and pressed his hands to his chest, with a long sigh of anguish.

"Damnation! the infernal Jesuit has found me out!" said the cardinal to himself, as he stamped his foot with rage. "He sees that he was compromised by his first movement; he is now upon his guard; I shall get nothing more from him—unless, indeed, profiting by the state of weakness in which he is, I can, by entreaties, by threats, by terror—"

The prelate was unable to finish. The door opened abruptly, and Father d'Aigrigny entered the room, exclaiming with an explosion of joy: "Excellent news!"

END OF VOLUME FOUR.

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